McCLURE'S MAGAZINE
VOL. XXXIV MARCH, 1910 No. 5

HEROES OF THE CHERRY MINE

BY

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ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

The silent spirit of unconscious masses is the source of all great things.—RENAN.

CHERRY, Illinois, is a small, flat town of the drab and dun frame houses of Scotch, English, German, French, Irish, Lithuanian, Polish, Scandinavian, and Italian mine-workers. Miners are the rovers of the deep of the lands of the earth as sailors are the rovers of the deep of its seas.

The town is six years old. It lies on the bare brown prairie, divided by a main street of saloons and small stores. A square brick schoolhouse, and two churches, one Roman Catholic and the other Congregational, stand at one end; beyond the other end rise the gray rock-dump and the chimneys and shaft-towers of the St. Paul Mine. In the daytime most of the male population of the town lives underground.

The shafts of the St. Paul Mine (see the diagram on page 489) run through three veins of soft coal, of which the first vein

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FATHERLESS CHILDREN, WAITING FOR LUNCH AT THE STATION OF THE RELIEF SOCIETY IN THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

is too thin to mine. Three hundred or more men work in the second vein, which is from four to five feet thick and lies 325 feet below the surface of the earth. Two hundred men, more or less, work in the third vein, which is three feet six inches thick and lies 200 feet below the second vein and 525 feet below the surface of the earth.

The miners go down to work in a cage through the main shaft. This main shaft runs to the bottom of the mine, but is not equipped for hoisting below the second vein, except with a dummy cage, which has never been used.

The main shaft reaches the second vein at the southwest corner of what may be called an irregular square of tunnels, like the streets about a city block. These tunnels, five and a half to six feet high, seven feet wide, and about three hundred feet long, are runways for the tracks of the coal-cars drawn by the mine mules.

The second-vein miners walk out along these runways to the entries leading to their rooms. Inside, the block is tunneled into entries, except for the mule-stable, the pump-room, and the main air-passage, a larger tunnel for ventilation.

To reach his work, the third-vein miner walks fifty feet from the main shaft to this main air-passage. It is a seven-foot tunnel, fourteen feet wide, running straight through the block, starting 50 feet from the main shaft, and reaching the opposite runway at the middle, about a hundred feet from each of its rounded corners.

In the main air-passage the third-vein miners pass a boarded-over sump, or marshy bottom, opposite the mule-stable; and, a hundred and fifty feet beyond the sump, they come upon the air-shaft or escape-shaft, and go down its cage or its stairs to the bottom of the mine.

Up this air-shaft they hoist coal from the third vein to the second, where the cars are switched around on the runways to the main shaft, and hoisted up the main shaft to the top.

The air-shaft is divided by a partition. On one side are stairs leading from the third vein to the surface. Some people say that there was a stretch of ladder for a part of the way; others, that the stairs were continuous from the bottom to the top of the mine. On the other side of the partition, the fan above throws air down the air-shaft and through the main air-passage, where it is distributed by various channels through the whole mine and up through the main shaft.

In this situation, three hundred and three men were working in the second vein of the St. Paul Mine, and one hundred and eighty-one men were working in the third vein, when, at half-

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TWO WIDOWS WHOSE HUSBANDS WERE LOST IN THE CHERRY MINE DISASTER

past eleven o'clock on Saturday, the 13th of November, a car of six bales of hay for the third vein was sent down the main shaft and switched, in its turn, around behind other cars to the air-shaft, which it seems to have reached between one and half-past one. Here it was pushed back into the air-passage out of the way, and the hay caught fire from a torch.

The cager and the assistant cager, Alexander Rosenjack and Robert Deans, seem to have

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Photograph by B. N. Rhodes

THE ST. PAUL MINE, AT CHERRY, ILLINOIS

Soon after this, smoke coming up the air-shaft was seen from the town; and women and children ran to the mine. Two loads of coal were hoisted. Some of the women were reassured at hearing that the fire was only a car of hay, and returned home. Others cried to the engineer, "Hoist the men, not the coal!" The main-shaft cager, Richards, came up on the cage, and ordered the engineer to hoist instantly a car of dynamite and powder, which was brought up at once.

had words about the fire. They tried to put it out with their coats. Then they tried to push the car to the sump and to hose and water from the mule-stable; but the smoke and some obstruction in the passage made this impossible.

Deese, a French driver, Albert Buckle, a trapper-boy, and other men ran around to the mule-stable to bring water from the trough, but could not reach it, for the smoke.

Photograph by B. N. Rhodes

SURVIVORS OF THE CHERRY MINE DISASTER; FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AFTER THEIR EIGHT-DAY ENTOMBMENT IN THE MINE

Rosenjack ran downstairs and told the third-vein cagers, William Smith and John Brown, that he would send the burning car down to them in the cage; he asked them to prepare a hose to put it out. There is another sump at the bottom of the air-shaft.

In the meantime, a party of third-vein men had gone up to the second vein to catch the half-past one o'clock cage to the top, among them Mr. James Flood and his brother-in-law, Mr. Haney, president of the local Union.

They saw the fire, but did not think it serious. They lent Rosenjack a hand in pushing the car of hay toward the air-shaft. As he said he needed no more help, they went on, caught the main-shaft cage, and reached their houses with so little thought about the incident that they did not even mention it at home.

In the meantime there had been all sorts of difficulties in getting the car of hay down to the third vein. It stuck. Mr. Nourberg, the assistant manager of the third vein, went above to give orders about the draught. Andrew Lettson, an American boy from the third vein, came up into the second vein, while the car was half on and half off the cage. He immediately went below to the sump in the third vein, where he and John Brown waited to put out the burning car when it should be thrown down the open shaft. They expected Rosenjack to have the cage hoisted out of the way and to dump the car down underneath it into the third-vein sump a few minutes later.

Rosenjack then had the cage lifted above

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THOMAS WHITE, WHO, WITH NINETEEN OTHER MINERS, WAS ENTOMBED FOR EIGHT DAYS, WITHOUT FOOD OR WATER; FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN DURING HIS CONVALESCENCE

the car. With other second-vein workers, he threw the car down into the third-vein sump; and Lettson and Brown put out the fire, as far as the hay and the car were concerned.

But as they now received no response to the signals they sent to the second vein, and as they heard the voice of Mr. Nourberg calling warnings and orders about the fire, Lettson ran upstairs again and lifted the trap-door at the top.

Rosenjack and Deans were gone; William Smith, the third-vein cager, was gone. Lettson saw the flames in the air-passage and air-shaft almost cutting off his escape. He turned and went deliberately back to the bottom, asked Thomas Hewitt, a mule-driver, to go in one direction and warn his father and brother and the men around them, while he, Lettson, went three hundred yards back to the face.

In speaking of this afterward, Lettson, in deprecation of praise, said: "Why, I had my chance; and I thought the rest ought to have the same chance."

When Lettson and Hewitt and their parties returned to the shaft, the men were crowding and fighting wildly in the stifling smoke now surrounding the foot of the third-vein ladder. Hewitt and Brown kept these men in line and started them on their way. Lettson led them into the smoke above. Brown said, "I am getting no signals from above. Better go up the air-shaft stairs." But the air-shaft stairs above the second vein were blazing.

Hewitt, Lettson, and Brown saved the lives of all those in the third vein who escaped that day. Hewitt was the last man to leave the third vein alive. He and those ahead of him

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urged Brown to follow. But Brown stood quietly at the foot of the shaft in the black stifle and horror around him. "I won't go until every man is out of this mine," he said.

These words, uttered from the heart of a fortitude that beggars all description, were the last utterance heard rising from the very bottom of the great disaster.

Lettson and Hewitt have no accurate count of the men in their party; there were probably about twelve or fourteen. Above, in the second vein, they entered into smoke and fire. Some men went in one direction, some in another. Oblivious of their own safety, Mr. Walter Waite, Mr. George Eddy, and Mr. Bundy, mine bosses and managers, were all going about in the depths of the second vein, crying warnings: "Go! Go quick!" Through the inclosing darkness and smothering smoke, the men in the second vein, realizing what was happening, were thronging out of the rooms and entries, around the runways to the foot of the main shaft.

When Noverio, a young Italian miner, with Hewitt and Lettson, entered the runway, it was filled with smoke, cars, mules lying down, and men lying on their faces and crying. Tosetti, another Italian, ahead, called back that there was no hope. He, too, lay down and cried. Noverio shouted to the men behind him to keep up their courage and come on. And these men struggled, stifling, running, climbing over dead mules and weeping, prostrate men, till they came out to the main shaft and managed to make the cage and reach the top.

Lettson stood at the turn of the runway, holding a light to show the way for the others. Another American, Vickers, stood at another turn, holding a light till it went out. Some one gave him another light, and that went out. Then some one else gave him a lantern, just as he was ready to drop, overcome with smoke. He managed to hang this lantern on a nail before he was driven forward by a blast of smoke, to struggle, more dead than alive, along the smoke-filled passageways to the shaft. As he fell fainting against it, some one touched his hand. A voice said, "Take my hand, brother." Some one he could not see dragged him forward; and

Photograph by Burke & Atwell, Chicago

A MINER'S FAMILY AT DINNER; FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SOON AFTER THE EXPLOSION; THE FATHER OF THE FAMILY NEVER RETURNED FROM THE MINE

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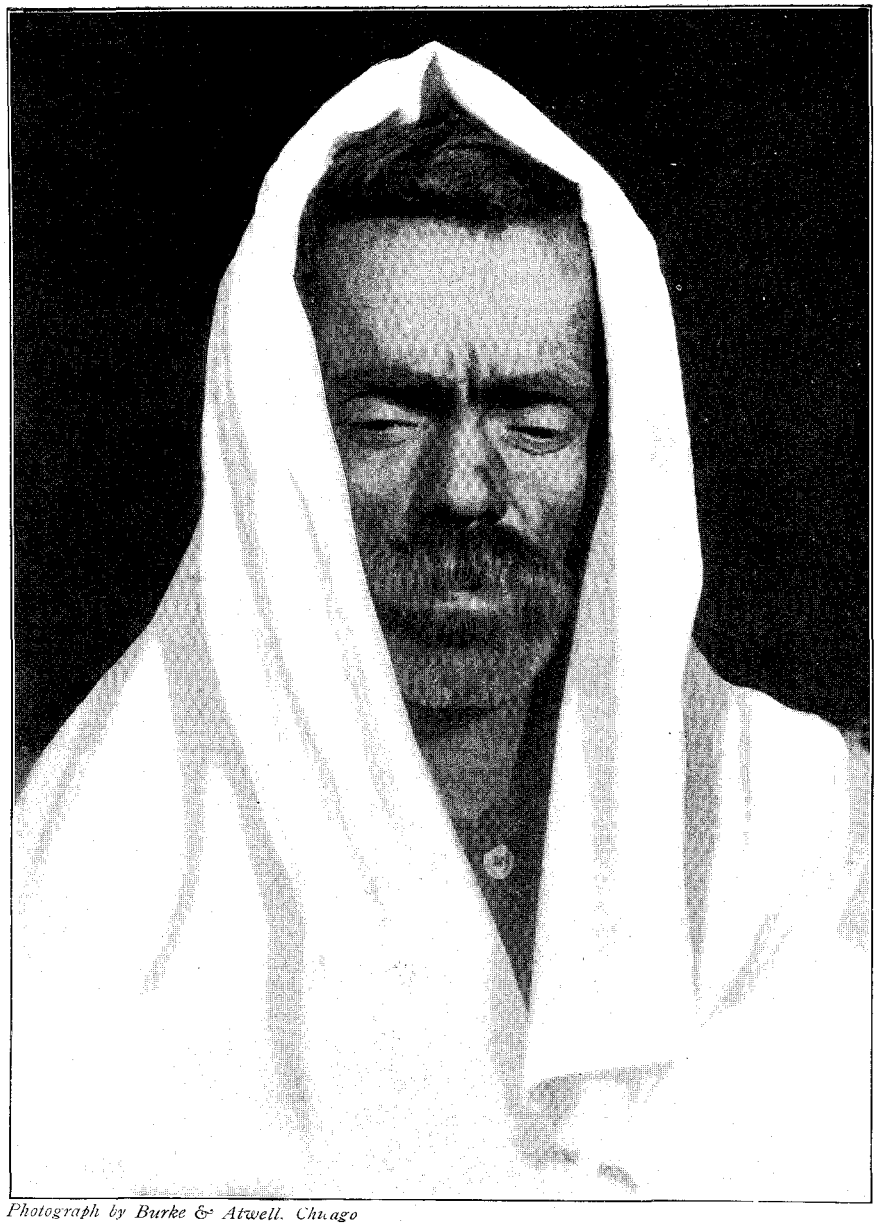

Photograph by Burke & Atwell, Chicago

FREDERICO LENZE, ONE OF THE TWENTY WHO SEALED THEMSELVES UP IN A PASSAGE OF THE SECOND VEIN AND LIVED FOR EIGHT DAYS WITHOUT NOURISHMENT UNTIL FOUND BY THE RESCUE PARTY

he knew no more till he was lying under the white light of day above-ground.

Here by this time men, as well as women and children, were running in an agony of apprehension toward the mouth of the shaft.

John Flood, a Scotch dry-goods merchant, the brother of James Flood, dropped his pen in the midst of an order for shoes in Chicago,—an order never to be finished,—and hurried to see whether his brother was safe. Charles Waite and John Smith, brother and brother-in-law of Walter Waite; George Brown, brother of the brave third-vein cager; Peter MacCrudden, with a father in the mine; Dominick Formento, a grocer from Turin; Joseph Hozie, an Austrian saloonkeeper; Ralph Eddy, a boy of eighteen, who was a top fireman; Ike Lewis, a livery-stable keeper; Dr. Liston Howe, the company physician; four Scotch mine-workers, Henry Stewart, Andrew McCluky, James Spears, and Robert Clark—all these men ran, in the sunlit afternoon, out of their houses and stores, many of them never to come back again.

Dr. Howe was among the first to reach the

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shaft, just as Nourberg, who had come up to order the reversal of the fan, entered the cage.

"How are things down there?" he asked.

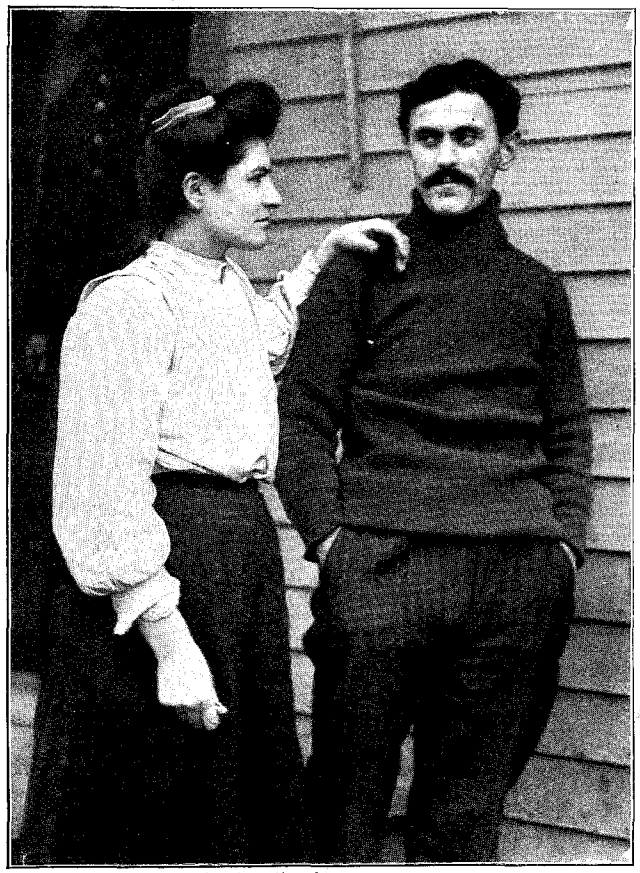
"Pretty bad," said Nourberg, coolly stepping into the little trap over the smoking funnel. He added that men were fainting in the smoke, and asked Dr. Howe if he would go down to help with them.

Below, the darkness and confusion were so great that Dr. Howe could tell where human beings lay only by kicking and striking something soft. This human body he dragged to the cage and hurled upon it.

Nourberg and Bundy, the two mine managers, Rosenjack, the air-shaft cager, away from his post, but risking his life momently at the main shaft, were working and calling in the darkness. Overhead, the timbers of the mine were burning, and in places might be heard the cracking and the warning of the rock.

As the cages of struggling, stifling men were taken up to the top by Nourberg, Bundy, Rosenjack, or Dr. Howe, to be revived, the doctor or one of the others would say, "Come along. Get in." One cage of rescued men to be revived came up as another cage of rescuers went down. All of those men mentioned, who had run from the town to the shaft, went down into the horror below in the next terrible half hour, forty minutes, hour — a length of time like eternity, and immeasurable, now, either from the comparison of the men who survived it or of the terror-stricken women and children at the top.

The descending rescuers dropped straight into tumultuous blackness and smoke and a hubbub of voices crying in many tongues from all parts of the second vein. At the foot of the shaft, John Zabriski stayed at his post. Charles Waite and James Stewart were seen there, too, giving signals. The rescuers were hallooing into the mine depths, running far down the flaming passageways, and dragging human figures out of an overwhelming blackness resounding with the confusion of the shouts of all those non-English-speaking Lithuanians, Germans, French, Poles, and Italians, who could only struggle forward with inarticulate cries, deaf to all word-of-mouth direction, through the very blindness of catastrophe.



Photograph by Burke & Atwell, Chicago

I. ANTENORE, ONE OF THE SURVIVORS; FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN OF HIM WITH HIS WIFE AFTER HIS EIGHT-DAY IMPRISONMENT UNDERGROUND

In such sheer splendor as that of these fighters in the fiery mine depths, there can be no greater and no less. Survivors seemed to recall with preëminent vividness the great voices and powerful arms of the big Englishmen and Scotchmen, Bundy, Stewart, Spears, Flood, and Clark, and the strength of Nourberg, as they ran and shouted and saved. But the others could hardly have fallen behind them in power. When I read this statement, concerning the Scotch and English, to the dead John Flood's two brothers, members of an old Scotch-Irish mining family whose grandmother had worked in the mines of Scotland, James Flood said quietly: "You must mean the English-*speaking* men were the brave ones. For there were foreigners that were just as brave as any Scotch or English." And he directed me to Joseph Hozie, a fierce-eyed, calm-faced Austrian from Iglau, of really ex-

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Photograph by Burke & Atwell, Chicago

MRS. URBAIN LEYNAND AND HER TWO CHILDREN; LEYNAND WAS ONE OF THE MINERS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE BURNING MINE

cessive moderation of speech. I give a part of what Mr. Hozie said of his experience in the mine, in his own words:

"I said to Dr. Howe: 'Wouldn't it be advisable for a lot of us fellows with good lungs to go down, half on the east and half on the west?' So Rosenjack and Dr. Howe went on the west side. George Brown and I went on the east side, with two other men.

"I went in forty feet toward the mule-barn. The smoke was pretty bad. . . . When I went in with air it was not so bad. Coming out against the air, I found it out that it was pretty tough. I had to get down on my hands and knees and my face along the rail to come out. . . . After that, I made out to go on the west side, on what we call the manway. I stopped and listened. I did not see no fire. But heard everything crackin' and burnin' and the warnin' of the rock. I noticed it was dangerous in there."

Mr. Hozie mentioned, with admiration, how he saw John Bundy "pretty near all in"; and asked him "wouldn't it be advisable" for him to go up on top before losing his life. But Bundy refused to go. Mr. Hozie also saw Rosenjack "all in" and carried fainting to the top, where he threw himself on the earth, too weak to rise, and cried and groaned, as some people thought, in remorse and horror over his faults in judgment at the outset of the fire, but, in Mr. Hozie's opinion, "because he couldn't go down."

However that may be, let every one remember that as soon as Rosenjack could rise again, he did go down, and stayed down, working in the burning passages and bringing men up, to the very end. This, as nearly as could be ascertained, was about half-past three, when the last cage was hoisted.

Dr. Howe, who came up with Rosenjack and Eddy as the last cage went down, ran to the engine-room, and frantically urged Cowley, the engineer, to lift the other cage at once. But

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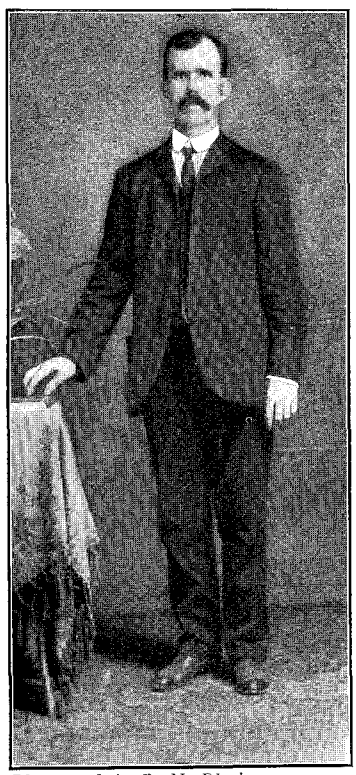
Cowley did not dare to lift it without a signal from below. The last cage signaled then to hoist slowly — four bells; then one bell — to stop; then two bells — to go down again. Wild, meaningless signals followed. Then came two bells — to go down again. Was the signal out of order? What did it mean? The breathless watchers in the engine-house urged Cowley to lift the cage. But his last signal from below had been to let it down. The intervals between the cages had not been, since the descents for rescue began, longer than six minutes. After an interval said by some witnesses to have been twelve minutes long, and by other witnesses to have been half an hour long, Cowley lifted the cage, without the signal. It held twelve people. Two of these were poor fellows who had apparently cast themselves in at the moment the cage reached the bottom, John Zuky and John Robisa, men all but unknown in the town, without



Photograph by B. N. Rhodes

JOHN FLOOD, A SCOTCH DRY-GOODS MERCHANT WHO WAS BURNED TO DEATH WHILE ATTEMPTING TO RESCUE OTHERS

Photograph by B. N. Rhodes

THE OXYGEN HELMETS THAT WERE USED IN THE DESPERATE EFFORTS TO FIND SURVIVORS OF THE DISASTER

families, and not identified for weeks afterward. The others were the ten rescuers, Dominick Formento, Robert Clark, John Bundy, Alexander Nourberg, Henry Stewart, Andrew McCluky, Ike Lewis, James Spears, John Zabriski, and John Flood. They were all burned alive. They had been dropped into a furnace.

No more lives were flung down the main shaft after that. Both shafts were filled with impenetrable smoke and flame. About eighty men had been rescued. Hope for the two hundred and sixty-three men still in the second vein, hope for the one hundred and sixty men still in the third vein, was abandoned.

It was considered that the single faint chance for the continuance of life below lay in the smothering of the flames. So planks were laid over the mouth of the air-shaft and sand was piled on them to make the lid air-tight. Before four o'clock the air-shaft was sealed.

Perhaps that hour may best be expressed in the experience of Mrs. Charles Waite, an extremely brave woman, who had seen her husband, a night examiner, at home, just before she left her house, early in the afternoon.

Charles Waite was one of the second-vein rescuers who never came up, like Peter MacCrudden and John Smith. His body was found on a road, far from the shaft, where he seemed to have run in rescue; the last tidings of him were

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that he replied to some one urging him to leave the mine: "I am going to stay with the rest."

"As I came out of the dentist's," said Mrs. Waite, "I saw Mrs. Nourberg walking along the street, and she was crying. She said: 'Oh, they say there is a terrible fire in the shaft; they say Ike Lewis [her sister's husband] is in it. And they say — they say my man is in it, too.' I said, 'Oh, it couldn't be so bad as that.' And then a feeling came over me that maybe my man was in it. I thought: 'Oh, God! Surely he wouldn't go down in the fire.' Then I could hardly hold myself till I ran to the shaft. When I got there, I went back and forth to one and another and asked them had they seen my husband. And no one had seen him.

"And just then I saw that they had closed up the air-shaft. Oh, no one could know how terrible it was there, then, among those mothers and children. No one could know what it was except those mothers and children there."

II

On Sunday morning the world had heard of the catastrophe at Cherry. Inspectors, doctors, reporters, the Red Cross, the company officers, foreign consuls, and mine-workers and members of the families of the men in the mine, from all parts of Illinois, came pouring into the little town.

By special effort on the part of the mine officials, Mr. Williams and Mr. Webb, with oxygen helmets and apparatus from the State Mine Experiment and Mine Life Saving Station at Urbana, were rushed to Cherry before daybreak, in the company's hope of opening the shafts and sending workers down immediately.

Mr. Paul and Mr. Rice came from the National Mine Experiment and Mine Life Saving Station at Pittsburg. Mr. Newsam, the President of the State Mine Examining Board, and the ten mine inspectors of the State, were ordered by Governor Deneen to go to Cherry at once to take charge of the rescue work.

Though Mr. Newsam was made chairman of their conferences, no one of these men had legal authority over any of the others. The mine inspectors of Illinois have no department chief. Besides, all, with the exception of the local inspector, Mr. Hudson, were greatly handicapped by the fact that they had no practical familiarity with the conditions existing in the mine at Cherry, nor with its roads and air-passages. They were obliged to work, as best they could, with maps and blue-prints.

Most of the inspectors believed that leaving the main shaft unsealed would only increase the

Photograph by B. N. Rhodes—Courtesy of the Chicago Record-Herald

WOMEN WAITING AT THE MINE-SHAFT

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Drawn by F. Van Sloan

DOMINICK FORMENTO, AN ITALIAN GROCER, WHO WENT DOWN WITH THE LAST RESCUE PARTY, AND WAS BURNED TO DEATH

draught and flame, and, in the impossibility of fanning air down, would retard the chances of any one's entering the mine. In this, as it afterward proved, they were right.

But the unconquerable feeling on all sides, that it was unendurable to close the mine's only means of entry while there were three hundred fellow creatures below, prevailed over everything else. Even if the inspectors and the company officials had insisted, they could not have kept the mine closed. The people around the main shaft would have opened it by force.

The air-shaft was unsealed on Sunday afternoon. Smoke instantly issued from it. It was realized that a barrier of flame was more impenetrable than one of planks and sand. The mine was closed again.

During the three days after Sunday, various unsuccessful attempts were made to unseal and enter the mine for the purpose of quenching the fire and recovering the dead. It was not believed that any human creature could have survived either the smoke or the black damp after Saturday afternoon.

It was not until the middle of the week that a lowered thermometer registered in the air-shaft a temperature in which human life could be sustained. The first descent was made at eight o'clock on a dark Wednesday night. A great crowd with lanterns and torches gathered about the mine. Williams of Urbana and John Smith, a brave miner from Ladd, were lowered down the air-shaft in a bucket, equipped with oxygen helmets and an automobile horn as a signal. A man wearing one of these helmets, with their great tanks and impedimenta, is said to have about an eighth of his strength left to use for other purposes.

Before the descent, Inspector Taylor asked perfect silence of all the crowd, so that the faintest sound of the horn might be heard. There was perfect silence. The brave divers stepped coolly into the bucket and were lowered into the ruins of the mine. Here they were to play a hose containing fire-destroying chemicals on the fire that was still burning below. But the hose was so heavy that they could not manipulate it successfully, and they were obliged to abandon the attempt as impracticable.

On Thursday descents were made by Mr. Rice and Mr. Paul with oxygen helmets.

Thursday morning, Inspectors Taylor, Moses, and McAllister, wearing helmets, went down the air-shaft on a float cage built at furious speed on Wednesday night, and brought up the first body, which Williams and Smith had seen on the previous night. Later, on the same day, Williams and Inspector Moses went down the main shaft, and found dense smoke and bad falls of rock. Playing hose, timbering, scattering disinfectants, and removing the dead — all these various pieces of work had to be done by these first workers in the darkness, fire, and overwhelming odor.

In the next twelve hours the fan was started, and the mine was entered by Mr. Steele, the Mine Superintendent, and other company men, by Inspector Epperson of Indiana, and Inspector Hudson and other inspectors of Illinois; by volunteers from the United Mine Workers; by John Evans of the Ladd Fire Department, and Captain Kenny, Lieutenant Smith, and other members of the Chicago Fire Department. There was still fire at the shaft bottom, and hose was played on it all night.

From that time on, through Friday and Friday night and Saturday morning of the week following the disaster, firemen, United Mine Workers, company men, and inspectors, all worked in the mine, day and night, in the efforts described, and in carrying out the dead, blackened and bloated, rolling them in canvas, and bearing them to the shawled women always waiting at the top to identify their lost.

Each morning Mr. Bicknell, the President of the Red Cross Association, lifting the curtain of the St. Paul railroad car where he stayed, would see at the first light the rows of muffled figures waiting in the hopeless daybreak.

There had been much talk in the newspapers

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about the wildness and hysteria of the mine tragedy. Mr. Bicknell had witnessed human conduct in the misery succeeding the San Francisco earthquake and the Messina disaster. I asked him about his own general impression of the behavior of the families of the lost at Cherry. It was then that he told me about the dawns he had watched beside the St. Paul shaft. "Hysteria?" he said. "I have never seen such fortitude."

Among the searching women was Mrs. Walter Waite. On the Saturday after the fire she stayed with a friend till nearly three o'clock, bending over body after body, looking for some recognizable belonging or feature. At last the

Drawn by F. Van Sloan

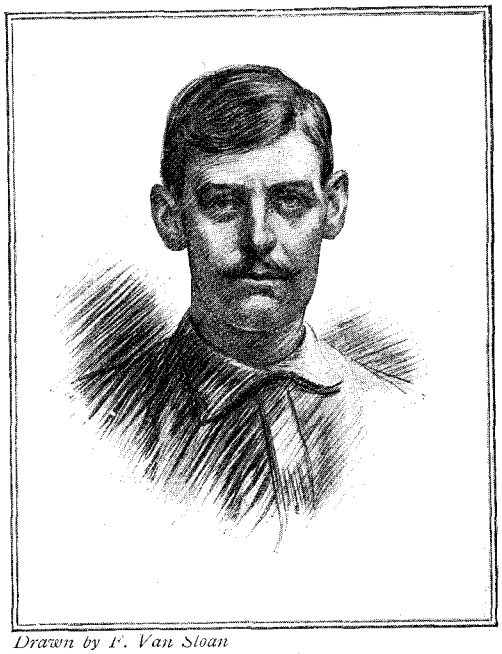
ANDREW McCLUKY, A SCOTCH MINE-WORKER, WHO WAS BURNED TO DEATH IN THE RESCUE WORK

two women could endure it no longer. Mrs. Waite went home, overwhelmed, and, unable to eat, even to drink, threw off her clothes and sank down on her bed in complete exhaustion. As she lay there, she heard footsteps and voices on the street and then at her door. "They say living men are coming out of the mine; and they say Mr. Waite is with them," the voices said.

She started up, threw on her clothes, and ran all the way to the shaft, around which the town was surging. The news was true.

III

On the afternoon of the disaster, Walter Waite and George Eddy had both gone so far



Drawn by F. Van Sloan

HARRY STEWART, A SCOTCH MINER WHO WAS BURNED TO DEATH IN THE RESCUE WORK

into the recesses of the mine, warning others, that at last they found they could not make the shaft. The parties met, and were led by Mr. Waite and Mr. Eddy along the last feasible road to the main shaft. The air grew heavier and heavier as they walked. Then Mr. Waite and Mr. Eddy, who were in advance, saw three mules drop dead just ahead of them.

Mr. Waite turned and said quietly to Mr. Eddy: "We are caught like rats in a trap. But there is no need to tell the boys about seeing the mules." He directed the men back to the passage from which they had come, which seemed to have fresher air, and sat down and lighted a pipe and smoked. Some of the others smoked, too, reassured by his coolness. They were nineteen in number, including English, French, Germans, Italians, Scotchmen, Americans, Poles, and Lithuanians.

Mr. Waite seems to have been from that time the natural leader. He is a small, delicately built man, with the deep hazel eyes of a religious enthusiast. He is a fervent Presbyterian, a mine boss, and an Englishman, born in the Forest of Dean and brought up in Illinois, where he has mined soft coal for twenty years.

While this party sat smoking in the passage where there was fresher air, they heard cries near; and Mr. Eddy went out and dragged in two more men, White and Lorimer, almost overcome with black damp.

These men said they had almost reached the

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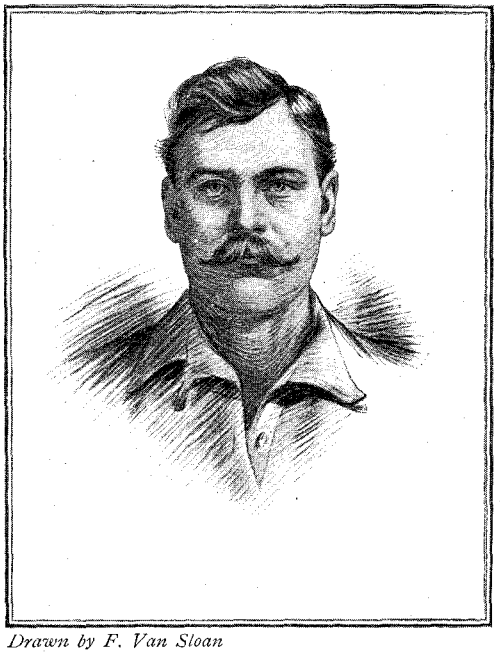
main shaft. It was a furnace. On the road by which they had tried to reach it, they had seen ahead of them a father and his boy of eighteen, lying dead in each other's arms.

In this place of fresher air, on the insistence of Mr. Waite and Mr. Eddy, these twenty-one people stayed till the following (Sunday) afternoon. The air grew worse and worse; the men's desperation greater and greater.

Lasti, an Italian from Bologna, by Sunday morning was frantic, seized his miner's pail of heavy tin, crushed it furiously in his hands into a ball, and flung it on the rock and trampled on it. "I never use you in this shaft any more, nor in any other!" he called, in a passionate outcry. The others laughed at him.

In the afternoon, a Frenchman, Leopold Dumont, said they would die if they stayed longer, and broke away. The black damp began to surge in more heavily soon afterward; and they all started out, directed by Mr. Waite, who came last with an old Lithuanian, Dan Holafethek, in a serious condition of exhaustion. Within a few moments Dumont returned to them. He was stifling then, nearly dying. The effort of accompanying the rest back through the bad air he had encountered, to a refuge for which Mr. Waite was steering, beyond this difficult passage, was too much for the poor Frenchman. He drew his last breath; and the others were obliged to leave him dead on the way.



Drawn by F. Van Sloan

ALEXANDER NOURBERG, WHO WAS BURNED TO DEATH IN THE RESCUE WORK

In the less choking atmosphere they reached beyond, Walter Waite said they would build a barrier to keep in the air they had found. The twenty men, in a passage about thirty-five hundred feet from the main shaft, in the second west entry, sealed themselves into a prison about 500 feet long, 9 feet wide, and 5 feet high.

It had previously been supposed that no man could live in air so full of black damp as to quench the light of an oil-lamp. Now, on this Sunday afternoon, even inside the barrier all but the carbide lights had gone out.

"After that," said George Eddy, in his story of their imprisonment, "we knew that all there was to do was to die there. You know, they say black damp doesn't cause any suffering. We thought we would just go to sleep there." All the men wrote letters to their families.

Here is the letter of a young Italian:

DEAREST SISTER:

I notify you of my unhappy death. I have got to die from suffocation and hunger. I salute you with tears in my eyes. I give kisses to you and your husband and children. Pray God for me.

I recommend my poor father to you. [Here follow illegible references to property in Italy.]

In leaving I ask for your forgiveness — pray for your loving brother a beautiful funeral — a thousand kisses to all — I beg you to go to the father.

YOUR BROTHER.

I cannot write any more — go to heaven — 700 lire you will send them to the father for a nice funeral and a beautiful cross on my tomb. Pray God for me.

In my trunk you will find 5 dollars in a little box — take my poor wages. Good-by — I beg you send the money to the father.

Here is George Eddy's letter:

NOV. 14.

DEAR WIFE AND CHILDREN:

I write these few lines to you and I think it will be for the last time. I have tried to get out twice, but was driven back. There seems to be no hope for us. I came down this shaft yesterday to help to save the men's lives. I hope the men I got out were saved. Well, Lizzie, if I am found dead take me to bury me in Streator and move back. Keep Esther and Jenny and Clarence together as much as you can. I hope they will not forget their father, so I will bid you all good-by, and God bless you all.

GEORGE EDDY.

Not long after the letters were written, Mr. Waite said they would have a little service for Dumont. The Protestants would have their service. Perhaps the Catholics would have their service. Then the English, Scotch, and Americans gathered together, and Mr. Waite prayed for their dead companion, and offered a prayer

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Drawn by F. Van Sloan

CHARLES WAITE, WHO WAS LAST SEEN DIRECTING THE RESCUE WORK IN THE SECOND VEIN

for safety. The Catholics gathered together and said the Pater Noster.

Then Mr. Waite raised his voice and all sang "Rock of Ages":

> Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
> Let me hide myself in Thee,
> Let the water and the blood
> From thy side, a healing flood,
> Be of sin the double cure,
> Save from wrath and make me pure.
> Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
> Let me hide myself in Thee.

No one knew more than the first verse, but they all joined in. The Catholics did not know the song at all. "But all joined in; it made no matter," said Mr. Lasti. After that they all sang "Nearer, My God, to Thee," and then whatever any one knew—"choruses and anything; any little thing would do."

"Nobody knew anything all the way through," said Mr. Eddy, afterward, with a slow smile.

As long as they could see each other at all, it was not so bad. But the carbide lights went out on Tuesday, and then the darkness was complete. All but Walter Waite gave up hope. At intervals, he would call each of the men by name: "Are you asleep? How are you feeling? How are you getting along?"

The youngest of them, a boy of eighteen, poor Josep Bolfiliola, wept constantly, and Waite could not console him. Josep's older brother, a driver, John Bolfiliola, had run off and left him in the fire; and Josep moaned, night and day, partly in grief at this brother's desertion, and partly in longing for him.

A Lithuanian, Brohaski, unless report from the darkness be in error, whistled constantly to cheer himself. He was a young man with a young wife and two children. "He called them his 'kilder,'" said Mr. Lasti. "The Slavs, they never speak at all. They have no tongue. They do not know a word of Italian language." Brohaski's whistling jarred every one's nerves. "Every one called out to him: 'Hi, you damn fool! You can stop that!'" Here, as Mr. Lasti's anecdote seemed to end suddenly, one might have supposed Brohaski had been suppressed.

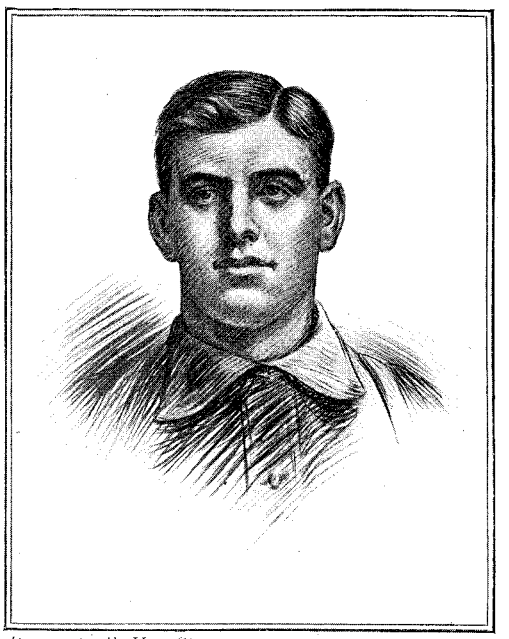
"Did he stop?" I asked, after a pause.

"No, no," replied Mr. Lasti, laughing, "not a bit."

Such was the discipline of the twenty men locked in the depths of the earth.

On the other hand, an Englishman attempted to break down the barrier and escape. If he had been successful, his effort would have killed himself and every one else with a rush of black damp. And it is said the leaders choked him till he nearly strangled, in restraining him.

The only food of the twenty was a little lard-oil, some of the oil known as "miner's sunshine," and the tobacco they happened to have in their pockets. Black damp deadens hunger



Drawn by F. Van Sloan

IKE LEWIS, A LIVERY-STABLE KEEPER, WHO WAS BURNED TO DEATH WITH THE NINE OTHER RESCUERS

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for some constitutions. Consequently, a few of the men hardly suffered at all from starvation. Others suffered torments. Mr. Waite had not yet eaten his dinner when the fire broke out, so he was a meal behind the others, and suffered proportionately. He endured agonies.

One day he told them casually that he wished he had a bunch of bananas he had eaten once in Chicago. Everybody instantly begged him not to talk of them. But it was a favorite story of Mr. Waite's, and he went on to tell how he had heard an Italian vender calling, "Bananas, ten cents a dozen." He gave the Italian ten cents, and the man counted the fruit into a bag — "Two, four, six, ten, twelve." When Mr. Waite opened the bag there were only ten bananas, but he ate them all. At this, every one groaned again and begged him not to mention the ten bananas.

Mr. Waite smiled the gentlest, most humorous smile in the world as he told me of this — certainly a remarkable instance of masculine resolution in telling a favorite story even in the very jaws of death.

The twenty suffered not only from hunger, but from the severe cold. At what they called night — they determined the time by feeling the hands of their watches — the men slept in three groups, each group curled up together, for warmth.

But the party's worst torture was thirst. After the first day, the men were put to the most terrible shifts for water. Mr. Waite, groping around the passage, found in some places a little seepage from the walls. He directed the men to hollow out cups in the ground. Five of these cups were dug. They collected less than half a pint apiece in twelve hours. The men took turns in drinking the seepage, though it was filled with fine particles of coal dust and almost strangled them as they swallowed it.

Then an ugly thing happened. Several men went, in their right turn, to their appointed cups, to find the hollows of the cups licked dry. In the concealing blackness, some one among the twenty had been stealing the seepage.

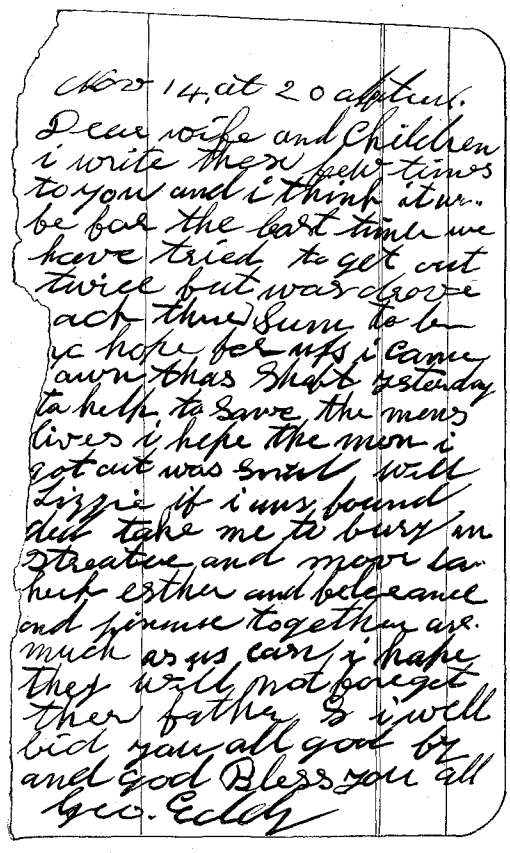
At the second turn, after his cup had been surreptitiously emptied, George Eddy, too weak to do more than creep, crawled to his drinking-place. The thief was lying there before him. It was one of the Lithuanians. Eddy came up silently behind him. "If I'd had a knife," he said to the man, "I'd have stuck it into you."

After that the man was guarded, and restricted to his fair share.

Toward Friday there was more and more despair. Even Mr. Waite, though he never lost hope, thought of cave-ins. And in one place in the diary his wife showed me, courageous, religious, exalted in tone though it is, he says his heart is breaking.

By placing his hand at the barrier, he could feel the air and know when the main shaft was sealed and unsealed. He constantly buoyed the others by telling them that he knew those above were trying to save them. He would say to them: "We are better off than those on top; for we know we are alive, and they don't know it." And: "Don't give up. We are going to give those people up there the very biggest surprise they ever had, yet."

On Saturday morning, when four of the men could barely crawl, Mr. Waite felt fresh air at the barrier. He asked for four volunteers to go out for water, and to test the air for others as they went, turning back instantly if they felt themselves at all overcome. A second relay of four were to follow the first quartet of men,



FACSIMILE OF THE LETTER TO HIS WIFE WRITTEN BY GEORGE EDDY, ONE OF THE IMPRISONED MINERS, AFTER ALL HOPE OF RESCUE HAD BEEN ABANDONED

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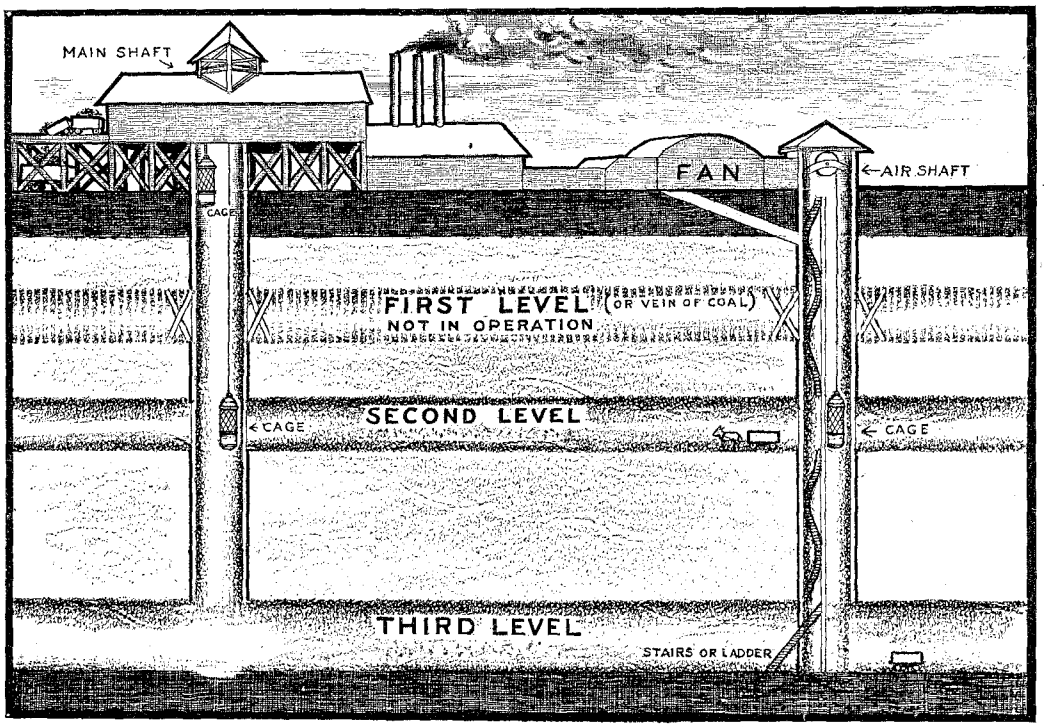

By courtesy of the Chicago Daily Socialist

CHART SHOWING THE UNDERGROUND WORKS OF THE ST. PAUL MINE

The shafts of the mine run through three veins of soft coal. The first is too thin to work; in the second, 325 feet below the surface, about 300 men were employed; in the third, 525 feet below the surface, about 200 men were employed. The main shaft was not equipped for hoisting below the second vein, so that, to reach it from the third vein, the miners were obliged to mount the air-shaft to the second level, and walk fifty feet along this level to the main shaft

and were to run forward and drag them back behind the barrier if the black damp made them faint. Mr. Waite, old Holafethek, and the sickest men remained just outside the hole for egress in the barrier. When the first four reached a certain entry, if the air was good and they felt that the hope of safety lay ahead of them, they were to whistle twice.

Beside the barrier Waite, Holafethek, and the rest stood waiting for an interminable time. Then, through the dark, sounded two whistles.

The men at the barrier, wild with joy, cheered back to their comrades. Some of them started to creep along the passage. They were all still in an atmosphere that would have instantly killed men entering from fresh air. Time had inured their lungs to the lack of oxygen. Three hours after the first four had left the barrier, Waite suddenly saw ahead two little lights coming.

The lights came nearer. They belonged to the men with the oxygen helmets.

IV

On the morning after the twenty survivors were brought up, we walked out over the brown fields behind the shaft. A little German woman, with pink cheeks, a brave, sad face, and deep, mournful eyes, gave us directions to the house we were looking for. She was hurrying toward the shaft.

"Has there been any trouble at your house?" some one asked.

"Yes," she said. "My husband is down there. I am all alone." And she sobbed for a moment on another woman's shoulder, and tied her shawl tighter, and hurried back to watch at the shaft.

Beyond, we met a little Italian boy, with a miner's pick. Before we could ask him where the people lived for whom we were hunting, he had run up to us with a rapturous smile, swinging the pick. "My father is alive!" he cried. "He lies on the bed."

Through Cherry, on that day, the hope of rescuing more entombed men was surging with new force. The firemen were chafing at staying on top. The miners were eager to enter the third vein, which had not yet been reached, and could hardly brook the caution for their lives felt for them by the managing inspectors.

The baffling character of the whole situation may be summed up by two facts: First, the

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first four of the entombed survivors had really walked out on the rescuers, whereas one would instinctively conceive of rescuers as breaking in on the entombed. Second, if it had been known above that twenty men were living in the mine on the previous Saturday night, the twenty would probably have been killed by fire draughts caused by the opening of the shaft.

While I heard little blame of individuals, I heard constant discouragement over a condition of things which certainly appeared to an outsider to be deeply dissatisfying and filled every one with a sense of great strain and pain.

It was as though human life were in danger, as in a fire or a surgical operation, and, in these conditions, conferences were held and charts consulted.

On Monday, the President of the United Mine Workers of Illinois, Duncan McDonald, went to the authorities at Cherry, and asked to be lowered, in a bucket, down the air-shaft to the third vein, to make certain whether there was impassable black damp there. The company promised that men would be sent down later. Two miners, one of the company men and an inspector, made the descent to the mine bottom that night. After wading to their waists in water, they came on a higher ledge, where they saw many dead bodies, how many they did not know.

The miners found below this ledge a dead man sitting upright with three pieces of slate in his hands. On the severed pieces were the figures 45, 23, and 92 — supposed to mean the decreasing or increasing numbers of the refugees. There were words, too, which were rubbed out in the difficulties of exit, and are not legible. The man who read them first thought they were, "We are all here to die together."

The next day the disappointed rescuers received another message from their lost comrades in the time-book diary of Sam Howard, a young miner who was found, with his brother, Alfred Howard, a boy of fourteen, in the east south gallery of the second vein. Sam Howard was to have been married on Christmas day to Mamie Robinson, a young girl in Cherry. A few days before he had bought a ring for her in La Salle, and ordered the ring engraved with her initials and sent to the Cherry post-office.

"14—1909. Alive at 10.30 o'clock yet.

"10.45, 11 sharp, Big Sam D. Howard. Alfred, my brother, is with me yet. A good many dead mules and men.

"I tried to save some, but came almost losing myself.

"If I am dead give my diamond ring to Mamie Robinson. The ring is at the post-office. I had it sent there. Henry Caumicent can have the ring I have home in my good clothes. The only thing I regret is my brother that could help mother out after I am dead and gone. I tried my best to get out, but could not.

"I saw Jim Jamieson and Steve Yinsko lying dead along the road and could not stand it any longer.

"To keep me from thinking I thought I would write these few lines.

"There is rock falling all over, but we have our buckets full of water, and we drink it and bathe our heads with it. 3 o'clock, and poor air and black damp. 4.15 o'clock, change of place. No black damp, but poor air. We lost a couple of our group. Two men tried to get out and could not get back.

"7.50 o'clock, tired, hungry, and sleepy; but I could stand quite a bit of this if I could get out of this hole. So what is the use of knocking when a man is down?

"7.50 o'clock in the morning. This is Sunday. There is no air. We fanned ourselves with lids of our buckets.

"Twenty-five after 9, and black damp coming both ways.

"Twenty-five after 10 A.M. Sunday. Still alive; that is, you will find me with the bunch. It is 11 A.M. That is, five of us, Alfred Howard, Miller, Leyshon, Sam D. Howard, Steele. We are still alive. The only hope is the fan. I think I won't have strength to write pretty soon.

"Fifteen after 12 P.M. Sunday. We are having a swell time making fans. We take our turns at the fan. We have three of them going.

"Twenty-seven to 3 P.M., and the black damp is coming on us. Only for the fans we would be dead.

"11 to 4 P.M. Dying for the want of air.

"Fifteen after 2 A.M. Monday. Am still alive. We are cold, hungry, weak, sick, and everything else. Alfred Howard is still alive.

"9.15 A.M. Monday morning. Still breathing. Something better turn up or we will soon be gone.

"11.15 A.M. Still alive at this time.

"Sixteen to 1 P.M. Monday. The lives are going out. I think this is our last. We are getting weak. Alfred Howard as well as all of us."

The mine-workers still felt that their access to their dead, or possibly living, companions below was slower than they were willing to risk. On Tuesday, after a conference of the Executive Committee of the Mine Workers, Duncan McDonald went to W. W. Taylor, the manager of the Cherry Mine, with a statement that the United Mine Workers would be responsible for the lives of those volunteers among themselves

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who wished to take risks in rescue in the mine, and asked that they be allowed free access through it.

Mr. Taylor was deeply touched. He gripped McDonald's hand and said: "Dunc, I appreciate what you and all these brave fellows are doing to save life here. I am willing that the United Mine Workers should take any risks approved by the inspectors; and we have no objection to the officials of the Mine Workers, or to any one else, inspecting any part of the mine."

Mr. McDonald telephoned and telegraphed to Governor Deneen, asking to have some one put officially in charge of the rescue work.

At this time Mr. Newsam, the former chairman, completely worn out, collapsed. Inspector McAllister was selected by the inspectors to fill his place.

On Wednesday morning, while arrangements were being made to pump out the third vein, it was discovered that fire had started in the coal itself. A meeting of all the authorities was held at midnight, when it was determined that conditions made further rescue work impossible, without mortal risk from the danger of conflagration in the shafts, the only possible means of entry to the mine. It was unanimously decided to close the mine till the fire was out.

This decision ended the rescue work. For weeks after that the mine was sealed.

V

The courageous life-savers working at the Cherry mine, both during and after the catastrophe, are uncounted, and include, as will have been seen, besides the United Mine Workers, firemen, inspectors, mine life-savers, and company men. Men from all these bodies risked their own lives, freely and repeatedly, in rescue or the hope of rescue. Among these, the rally of the Mine Workers to their companions was to an outsider especially striking, and the responsibility and devotion of their officials seemed unfailing, from first to last.

Of course, not all the men who emerged from the disaster or remained in the mine were heroic. Drivers and cagers deserted their posts. Men fled, and fled over prostrate living bodies, and, like all the world, simply naturally sought their own safety. Some sought their own safety first, and afterward went back to die, in the hope of rescue. John Bolfiliola, the driver, remembered his younger brother, Josep, when he reached the top of the mine, and returned to its depths for him, and was lost when Josep, coming out with the twenty, asked for his beloved older brother.

Very stirring was the strength spent in rescue after the fire; very thrilling the long, cool planning and undying hope and endurance of Walter Waite and many of his companions who were entombed alive.

And there is one mute superiority in the conduct of the twenty that is like a classic touch of nobility and must not go unrecorded. None of them has ever told the name of the man who took the drinking-water.

The fortitude of those who fought for the lives of their fellow creatures, in the flaming depths of the earth, surpasses the splendor of conquerors in battle on land or sea. For the mine rescuers fought in a passion of unconscious sympathy and responsibility so much more gripping and abiding than all longing for conquest or glory as to thrill the mind with the sense of a new magnificence in mortal aims and powers.

Six months ago, many a person driving through the town of Cherry would have passed undreaming of the force and pride of life in its dumb houses and cindery streets and alleys. But out of these dumb houses arose human beings who have cried around the world the power of fortitude and of fraternity.

VI

Loss of life in the mines of the United States may be called a chronic catastrophe.

According to the United States Geological Survey, 22,840 men have been killed in our coal-mines in the last seventeen years, and nearly 50,000 have been seriously injured.

John Mitchell says:

"In the coal-mines of the United States there are killed an average of four men annually out of every thousand employed: whereas in the continental countries of Europe less than one and in Great Britain about one and a half in every thousand are killed annually. . . . Coal-mining is the most hazardous industry in America."

"In no country," says the Bulletin of Labor issued by the Department of the Interior, "are the natural conditions so favorable for the safe extraction of coal as in the United States. The number of lives lost per thousand men employed is far higher than in any other coal-producing industry. . . .

"In regard to deaths per million tons of coal, the United States not only occupies a position worse than that of most of the European countries, but is also showing an increase in the rate, whereas every other country is showing a decrease. . . .

"It now remains to be shown that, unless ener-

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getic means are taken to counteract the prevailing tendency, not only will the death rate in proportion to men employed and tons produced increase as it has done in the last few years, but it will increase at a much more rapid rate.

"With the depletion of the thicker and more favorably mined seams of coal, thinner and less regular seams must be worked. This factor will undoubtedly be of the greatest importance within a comparatively few years. And the natural result would be greatly to increase the death-rate.

"The rising price of timber will have the effect of decreasing the number of wooden props used in mining, and probably will increase the chance of accidents from falls of roof and coal.

"Another important factor in the mines of the United States may be found in the nationality of the miners. Most of the men are foreign-born, a large number are unable to understand English freely, and a still larger number are unable to read or write that language. Some of them are inexperienced and do not take proper precautions either for their own safety or for the safety of others. This becomes a most serious menace unless they are restrained by carefully enforced regulations. . . .

"A great increase in the number of accidents must be expected unless proper steps are taken to remedy the conditions that have brought about the present remarkably high death-rate in the coal-mines of the United States."

Bulletin No. 33:

"The United States is showing an increase in the rate, whereas every other country is showing a decrease."

In other words, Great Britain and the Continent have decreased their mine death-rates by enlightened legislation and enforcement.

The enormous subject of the value and success of many different governmental efforts of relief — employers' liability laws, more accurate knowledge of various explosives, such as is now being compiled by the United States Geological Testing Station at Pittsburg, laws in regard to fire-proof stables, mine telephones, shot-firing, installations of safety-devices — is beyond the scope of this account of one mine tragedy.

If great coal industries in other countries can, by enlightened legislation and enforcement, successfully maintain increasingly safe conditions in their mines, there seems to be no reason why the coal industries of the United States cannot adopt the same methods.

Few persons are, like Stewart, Nourberg, and Formento, capable of magnificently flinging away their lives to save the lives of others. Few persons are capable of heroism. But whole multitudes are capable of responsible and honest sympathy; and sympathy, the passion of democracy, was, at bottom, the force that inspired these heroes of peace, and saved every man rescued from the St. Paul Mine. The words written on the piece of slate in the third vein are true, not only of the hundred and sixty men in the mine bottom, but for every creature on the earth. Everybody worthy of the name of human knows at some time, with a proud thrill, the deep truth that we are all here to die together.

This sympathy and this knowledge should be potent in the future to make safer all work in the mines of the United States.

AT EUSTON STATION

BY

KATHARINE TYNAN

YON is the train I used to take
In the good days of yore,
When I went home for love's dear sake,
I who go home no more.

The station lights flare in the wind,
The night is blurred with rain,
And there was some one, old and kind,
Who will not come again.

Oh, that's an Irish voice I hear,
And that's an Irish face,
And these will come when dawn is near
To the beloved place.

And these will see when day is gray
And lightest winds are still
The long coast-line by Dublin Bay
With exquisite hill on hill.

I would not follow if I might
Who came so oft of old;
No window-pane holds me a light,
The warm hearth-fire is cold.

There is the train I used to take.
Be blest from shore to shore,
O land of love and of heartbreak!
But I go home no more.

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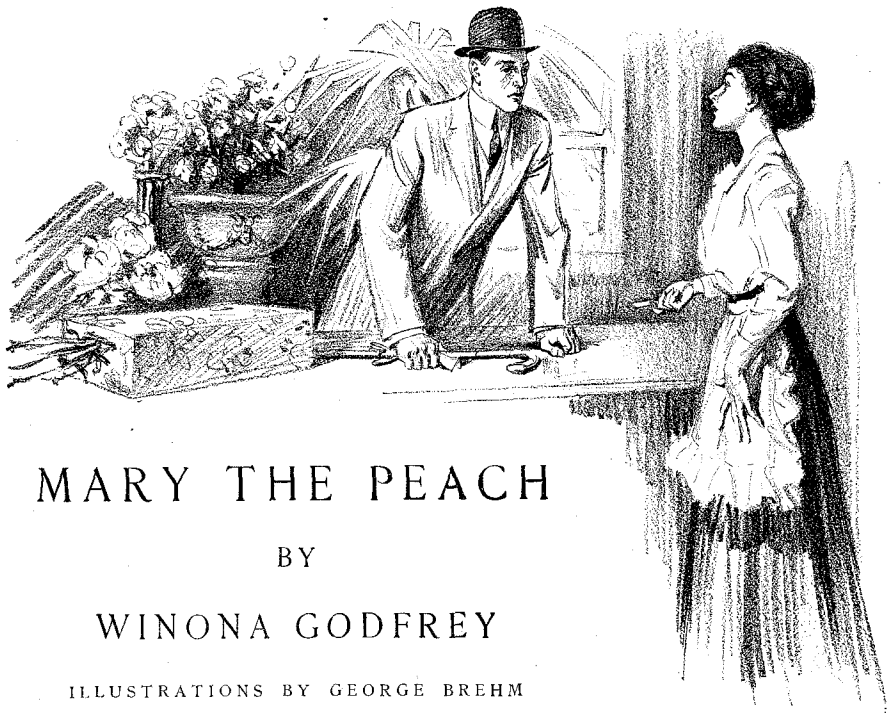

MARY THE PEACH

BY

WINONA GODFREY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE BREHM

A NICKNAME sometimes indicates a height attained, sometimes merely hints the special height desired. Mary's in a measure did the first, but only to the most subtly discerning could it even vaguely disclose the second. In the vernacular of her world the expression was the public acknowledgment of her superlative beauty.

And that this popular unanimity of opinion had also some commercial value was proved when Myrick voluntarily raised her salary from eight to ten dollars a week. Mary was undoubtedly worth it, for many young men came in for boutonnières who could ill afford them and who would have gone without very cheerfully had there been no Mary to pin them on.

Looking in the mirror was one of Mary's pleasures. She, too, had an eye for beauty, and it was almost impersonally for her beauty's sake that she was ambitious and mercenary. She longed to place that beauty in its proper setting, to embellish it, to have it fashionably clad — in short, to fit it with a suitable shrine where all might worship unashamed.

Her mother, a hard and handsome woman, had lived long enough to inculcate the lesson that Mary's beauty was Mary's only stock in trade. With it she must purchase wealth and social position, a foothold in the smart sphere that pictured Mrs. Clyde's idea of heaven.

That Mary kept a cool head against the siege of many plebeian admirers was doubtless due to this careful teaching. Therefore, she went to the theater with Neil Kelly, the plumber; rode on the scenic railway with Eddie Perrin, the shipping clerk; and ate Bishop the football coach's chocolates, all very impartially and non-committally.

It was not until Haller came into the florist's shop the second time that she began to dream. He wished to select flowers for Sybil Renshaw, and his mind was full of her; still, he gave Mary an appreciative glance, and he did not try to make conversation with her, as most men did. Perhaps that was why he stayed so persistently in her thoughts.

When he had gone, she felt oddly depressed. She turned to inspect herself in the mirror behind her. Yes, she was pretty, very pretty— beautiful; but what was the use of it? Young men of the station she wished to adorn came into the shop and tried to flirt with her, perhaps asked her to lunch or to dine with them; but they did not invite her to ride with them in the park nor to sit with them in a box at the opera.

It was being Mary the Peach, who worked in a florist's shop, that made her a pariah to

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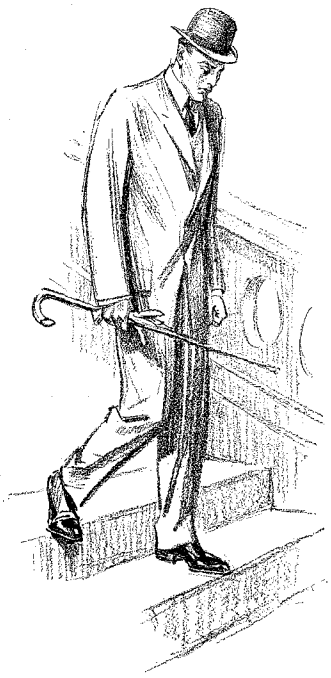

"SO SYBIL TACTFULLY, BUT AT ONCE, BROKE WITH THE DISINHERITED KNIGHT"

"society." Well, one must eat, and Mary's talent was beauty, not intellect. She might go on the stage. Only — Mary wasn't wholly obvious; she had a freakish streak — she wasn't stage-struck.

So she went on arranging the roses lovingly (she looked a sister to them) and awaited the coming of that which should come. Among the roses she packed were those sent frequently to Miss Sybil Renshaw with the card of Mr. Kirke C. Haller.

Over these Mary the Peach used to pause a little. She wasn't particularly imaginative, but she could almost thrill over the make-believe that they were for her — from him. The Society Page had informed her that the two were engaged. Miss Renshaw was very pretty and very fashionable and ultra-"smart," and Mr. Haller was all these things in the masculine gender. Miss Renshaw, indeed, was the happy possessor of all that worldly paraphernalia that Mary craved — including, possibly, Mr. Kirke Haller.

She was actually musing upon something like this, alone in the florist's shop one rainy morning, when Haller himself suddenly opened the door and came in. He walked straight across the shop and stood looking at her without replying to her surprised "good morning." And she, not knowing what else to do, stood still, too, and looked at him.

He was pale, with dark circles around the eyes, and his mouth was set sardonically. Something about him rather frightened Mary. He was usually so courteous, so immaculate, so gently gay.

"Mary," he began (he didn't know her other name), "do you ever think of anything but money?"

Mary fell back a step. "Why, I — I —" she stammered.

"You remember me, don't you, Mary?" he tacked. "I've been in here often."

"Oh, yes — yes, of course."

"My name is Haller"; he handed her a card with a sort of mocking ceremony, and she read it stupidly over and over.

"I was just going by," he carefully explained, "and happened to look in and see you. So it occurred to me that I would just come in and ask you to marry me."

Mary did not blush; instead, the color slowly left her face. The poor young man!

"Oh, no, I'm not." His bitter smile widened as he read her thought. "I'm perfectly sane. Take a good look at me, Mary. Will you marry me?"

"Yes," said Mary steadily, wiping her hands absently on her little apron.

"All right. Now run and get on your hat and coat. If we hurry we can get it done before luncheon."

At this moment Myrick came out of the little back room. The young man turned to meet him.

"Mary and I are just going out to be married; so you needn't expect her back," he said. "The rain is bad for business, isn't it?"

Myrick opened his mouth and shut it again without emitting a sound. Mary had hurried to the back of the store, and, not even stopping to powder her nose, now reappeared putting on her hat, her coat over her arm.

"Married!" Myrick gasped. "Why — why — ain't this kind of sudden, Mary?"

Haller spoke for her. "Quite sudden. You're right, Myrick, it's quite sudden."

His short laugh had almost an ugly sound as he took Mary by the arm and led her out into the street. They walked a block without speaking; then Haller stopped a taxicab, which Mary entered, quite without the thrill she had always expected to feel upon that great occasion.

In fact, she was not conscious of any feeling whatever. She seemed in a trance, moving like an automaton, without reflection and without emotion. She had, indeed, been a little frightened at first, but she was not going with Haller because she was afraid nor because she

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particularly wanted to go — she was just going.

It does not require much time to take the not wholly irrevocable step in these United States. Haller and Mary sat down to luncheon as man and wife, and they were such a distrait bride and groom that not even the waiter suspected that they had just been married.

Haller had something of the air of a person in a trance, and ate little; Mary's appetite, however, never failed her, and did not now, though she was not quite at her ease with all the forks and spoons. Conversation between them was virtually a minus quantity.

Haller frowned thoughtfully as they paused uncertainly on the sidewalk after leaving the restaurant.

"Let me see — what will be next? Oh, yes,"— he looked at Mary as if he saw her for the first time,—"clothes; that's it, clothes."

A big department store was just across the street, and into this Haller led his wife. Though her face brightened, Mary made no comment. No one ever had, or ever would, consider Mary a garrulous person.

There is no denying the power of clothes. Clothe a beautiful woman shabbily, and her loveliness is dimmed as a diamond greased. Drape her with shimmery satin, wind her with velvet, or pour her melted into tailor-made broadcloth, and the wonder of her is become a devastating thing. So with Mary. Some women have a talent for music, for talking, for cooking; Mary's was for clothes.

Her cheeks reddened, her eyes shone, her breath came quickly, as she inspected and selected and tried on. The beautiful things she had yearned for almost hopelessly were hers. A pleasant excitement possessed her; more, she was happy: she was intoxicated with clothes.

Haller stood stoically by. At last she turned to him, flushed and smiling.

"I — I guess that's all."

"One of those low-necked things?" he suggested. "Did you get one to wear to-night?"

She shook her head, speechless.

"This way, Madam, if you please," begged the respectful saleswoman, who had lunched at cafeterias with Mary the Peach a hundred times, knew perfectly well who she was, and was almost out of her mind with curiosity.

Mary's unaccustomed feet trod reverently as the golden streets of heaven the velvet carpet of the "French Room." Marvelous "creations" were brought out respectfully for her approval, filmy things that her very eyes caressed.

Presently Haller indifferently indicated a Nile-green robe. "Try this one on," he suggested.

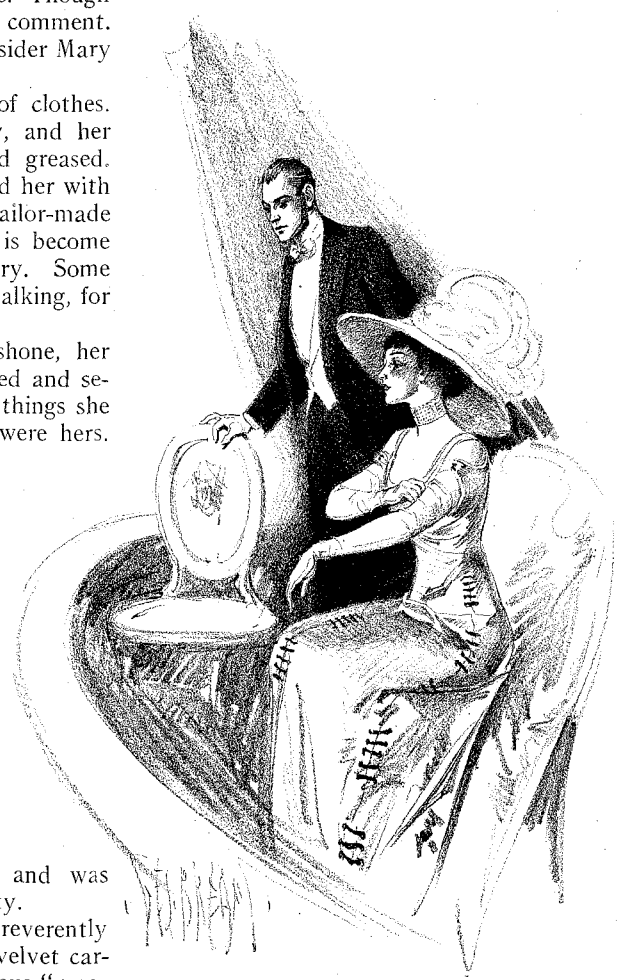
When she again stood before him, the gloomy abstraction that had enveloped him melted a little. No mere man could look on Mary thus, wholly unmoved.

"That's fine," he conceded. "We'll take it." Then, as the thought struck him, he turned to her again. "That is, if you like it the best. Does it suit you?"

"Oh, yes, yes — if you like it," she acquiesced, with gentle eagerness.

While Mary was getting out of this last gown and into the street-suit, Haller paid the bill (which was shocking), and ordered everything sent at once to a certain fashionable hotel where he had engaged apartments by telephone.

While they were going there in the taxicab



"A SIGNAL FOR ALL THE LORGNETTES IN THE HOUSE TO TURN THAT WAY"

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he sat looking at Mary in a sort of bewilderment. And when, afterward, she came to him dressed for dinner and the opera, as he had directed, something like consternation crossed his face.

"Mary, you're a beautiful thing!" he exclaimed, almost as if he hadn't noticed it before.

Mary was puzzled. She gazed at him helplessly.

"Y-yes," she said.

Every one stared as they entered the dining-room. Mary had never before been in so wonderful a place; but, fortified by a dim knowledge that she was the most wonderful thing in it, she bore herself with self-possession. After dinner came the theater, where Haller put her in the front of the box, a signal for all the lorgnettes in the house to turn that way. She came out of the whole ordeal very creditably; there was not much chance for social "breaks," and certainly there was no flaw in her outward perfection.

Thus began Mary's wedded life, and for some weeks it continued in very much the same way. Haller went to his office every morning, leaving her to her own devices, which were principally "doing" her hair and reading books on etiquette and "Social Usages"— and asking herself, Why — why was she Mrs. Kirke C. Haller?

She had attained the topmost height of her dreams. To be the wife of a gentleman, to go always beautifully clad, to live in what she had always thought of as "swell apartments," to have nothing to do — In her tiny bedroom at Mrs. Shanahan's she had thrilled at the dream the realization of which she had fancied would lift her into realms of earthly bliss, hardly even to be imagined. Now — oh, wonderful! — this dream was true, and yet — she marveled at herself, she was shocked at her own ingratitude — she wasn't so very happy. Why not admit the truth? She wasn't happy at all!

Here she sat in a beautiful room, dressed in a beautiful gown, her hair beautifully done, and she wasn't happy: she was only sad and lonely and misfit. Somehow, when she had dreamed of being married to a gentleman, she hadn't thought it would be like this. Child-like, she felt without knowing what or why, was perhaps dimly conscious of little reaching tendrils, deep within, groping out wistfully into the cold loneliness of the big world for some understanding soul about which to twine their tender and passionate fingers.

Why had Mr. Haller taken her from the florist's shop that day? What did he want her to do? What did he want her for? He didn't love her; he had never kissed her, had never so much as taken her hand. All the men she had known had wanted to kiss her, had pleaded to kiss her *just once*; and she hadn't let them because she didn't care to be kissed — not by Neil Kelly or Eddie Perrin, anyway. And Mr. Haller — Kirke — didn't want to kiss her — which was strange; she couldn't understand it.

She looked critically in the glass — oh, yes, she was beautiful, but what was the good of it? He was kind and polite, and put her cloak around her, and all those things; yet, with it all, he never really *noticed* her.

She tried very hard to be a credit to him. To commit any blunder that might make him ashamed of her would almost have killed her. Fortunately, her natural refinement readily took on the artificial polish. Mrs. Clyde had had some early "advantages," so that in the matter of grammar Mary's training had not been altogether lacking, and her slow contralto speech had a charm of its own. For the rest, she was silent — not exactly discreetly so, but because that was her nature.

When they dined with some friends of Haller's, Mary acquitted herself so well that she yearned for his commendation. At home, he asked her carelessly how she liked the Fernalds. She replied truthfully that she liked them very much, and hoped that Mrs. Fernald liked her in turn.

"Yes," Haller agreed; "she would be a good friend for you. I expect you get lonesome," he added as an afterthought.

"Sometimes — a little," Mary admitted gently.

He looked at her attentively. "You don't have any of your old friends come to see you, do you?"

She shook her head.

"Why not?" he queried sharply.

She hesitated, her color deepening. "I was afraid you — wouldn't be pleased," she finally murmured.

He laughed rather ruefully. "Don't think me a snob, Mary, at least." Then, slowly, "And you wish — to please me?"

What a silly question! "Why, of course," said simple Mary.

He came and took her hands in his. "My poor girl"— his voice was gentle. "What a fool, what a brute I was! Mary, I have wronged you cruelly. And — I'm sorry."

Her big, deep eyes widened. "Oh, no, you haven't," she denied. "Why, you've just given me everything."

He dropped her hands and turned away.

"And — I've deceived you, too. I'm not rich, as you probably think."

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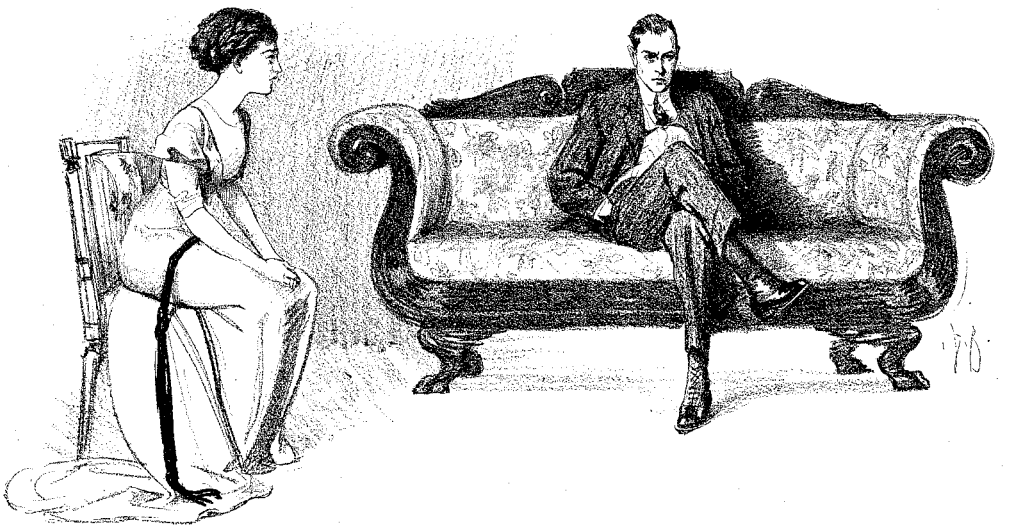

"'THERE'S THE WHOLE PRETTY STORY, MARY'"

"Oh," she breathed in a tone of gentle regret, of sympathetic concern. That was why he had looked worried lately. "I'm so sorry." She used to say just that when some one pricked a finger on a thorn at the florist's shop.

He gave her that quick look again.

"Will you mind giving up all this?" He indicated their surrounding splendor. "I was thinking of going to another town, too. Would you mind so much?"

How thoughtful he was! "Of course not. And then, you know," she explained cheerfully, "I'm used to not being rich." It would be so much harder for him who wasn't used to it! She wondered why he laughed that bitter little laugh, though his eyes were so much softer than usual.

They moved to San Francisco, where Haller had accepted a position, and rented the dearest little flat, and had a little maid to do the work, who was exceedingly impressed by the beauty and style of madam, and who never would have dreamed of dreaming that she had once been Mary the Peach, pinning boutonnières in a florist's shop.

And if Mary was not perfectly happy, she was very much happier. To her this sort of thing was not poverty; it was more than riches. She had almost learned to say "Kirke" without blushing about it; and Kirke talked to her, and consulted her, and took her to places, and introduced his friends to her. These gentlemen fairly genuflected before her, and wrung Kirke's hand afterward, which somehow pleased her, although she fancied that a peculiar expression always crossed Kirke's face on such occasions.

A good many months passed, and only sometimes, perhaps when she was sitting alone in the dusk, did she ask herself the old question: Why — why?

Then, one day, Kirke surprised her by coming home in the middle of the afternoon. There was something strange in his manner that made her heart beat a little faster, for now he never looked stern and terrible, as he had at first.

"Mary," he began, without preface, "I've been in the dust a long time without speaking; now I'm going to confess all my sins."

She had left her chair when he entered and stood before him, her hands clasped loosely, the old look of half-appealing puzzlement in her lifted eyes.

"I was engaged to a girl back there," he went on slowly.

"I *thought* so," murmured Mary to some old inner question.

"I thought I was very much in love with her, and she thought that I was going to be very rich." His quiet voice hinted not even a bitterness outlived. "In the midst of my fool's paradise, the girl——"

"Sybil Renshaw," supplemented Mary gravely.

Haller's smile was grim. "Exactly — Sybil Renshaw — discovered that, as a matter of fact, I would never come into the inheritance that was to have been mine. So Sybil tactfully, but at once, broke with the disinherited knight."

Mary's beautiful mouth drooped a little. In some vague way she felt that she was being hurt, that there was some old stab in all this that smarted afresh.

"I won't try to tell you how I felt. It was

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a blow — a knock-out to my vanity, anyway. I suppose you don't know, Mary, how men take those things sometimes." He smiled at her faintly. "I don't remember planning any revenge, but I wanted to hurt her as she had hurt me. It was just spite, plainly. You see,"— he hesitated, looking away from her,— "I'm not trying to — varnish the tale. So — just at the psychological moment, I guess — I passed Myrick's and — saw you through the window."

Mary winced; her color began to ebb. He dropped his eyes to the penknife he was turning in his hands.

"I wasn't consciously looking for the woman who would take me penniless, if she must; who would go where I willed and do what I wished, happily and without question, because it was what I wished —" he broke off. "I remember thinking that here was a girl whose beauty in the same setting would blot Sybil's prettiness into a blur — and — I wouldn't have to have a million —— I expect you to despise me, of course."

Mary was silent. What was the use?

"It seemed to give me pleasure"— he recalled it with a sort of wonder —"to see her cringe when I flaunted you in her face."

Would he never stop?

"Oh, I know I'm hurting you," he cried savagely. "I can't scourge myself enough unless I do." His voice fell dully. "There's the whole pretty story, Mary."

At least, Mary was not Sybil — he should not see Mary wince. Perhaps the clasp of her fingers tightened a little.

"Well?" she said levelly.

"Well, I've got my million, after all." Not a note of elation sounded.

There was a pause. She was grateful that the room was beginning to darken. Presently ——

"I'm glad for you," came the steady contralto.

"Glad for me!" he cried. He turned to her again, almost beseechingly. "But what can I do for you?"

"Why,"— her laugh was carefully light,— "you've done lots of things for me."

"What?" he asked huskily.

"Given me all this," she made a little encompassing gesture, "and — all my gowns — and things ——"

"Clothes," he groaned. "Good God!"

Suddenly she began to tremble; a terrible thought had come to her. Now that he had his million — if he were free, perhaps he wished ——

"I see — I see now"— not quite as steadily as before —"why you are telling me all this. You want — I suppose you want to divorce ——"

A harsh sound broke from him. The innocent knife had entered and turned in the wound. He caught her roughly in his arms, his face close to hers.

"Now," he whispered hoarsely, "that from you has made my punishment complete!"

After all, Mary was not so dull. Her beauty began to shine as a church window glows from a soft altar-light within.

"O-oh," she cooed consolingly, drawing his cheek down to hers.

THE STAR

BY

FLORENCE WILKINSON

BETWEEN the leaves of elecampane
Above the pasture bar
I glimpsed the Evening Star.
I could have plucked it 'twixt two stalks
Of feathery weed,
Palpable as a globe of burning thistle seed.

Upward I climbed;
Then it receded motionless,
No longer by the hilltop bar,
But proud and far
On the blue threshold of another world,
Flashing the while
From that vast outland where it whirled
A still and planetary smile.

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WHAT THE PUBLIC WANTS

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

BY ARNOLD BENNETT

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

CHARACTERS

SIR CHARLES WORGAN, Newspaper Proprietor. } Brothers.
FRANCIS WORGAN, Wanderer. } Brothers.
JOHN WORGAN, Provincial Doctor. } Brothers.
SAUL KENDRICK, Manager of Worgans, Ltd.
HOLT ST. JOHN, Theatrical Manager.
SAMUEL CLELAND, His Stage Manager.
SIMON MACQUOID, Dramatic Critic.
JAMES BRINDLEY, Earthenware Manufacturer.
EDWARD BRINDLEY, His Son.
PAGE-BOY.

EMILY VERNON, Widow.
MRS. CLELAND (Henrietta Blackwood).
ANNIE WORGAN, Wife of John Worgan.
MRS. WORGAN, Mother of the Worgans.
MRS. DOWNES.
SERVANT at John Worgan's.

TIME: To-day.

ACT III

NOTES ON THE CHARACTERS

The whole atmosphere of this act is provincial

JOHN WORGAN.—Sir Charles' elder brother. Successful doctor in an industrial town. Overworked. Nervous. Thin. Highly educated, with very artistic tastes. A great scorner of unintellectual people; and a great scorner of the public. His lip soon curls. With that, a man of the finest honour. Age 43.

ANNIE WORGAN.—His wife. The matron. Capable. Sensible. Slightly "managing." Her husband has given her a certain culture, but fundamentally she is a housewife. She knows that she is always equal to the situation. Nicely dressed. Age 35.

MRS. WORGAN.—John's mother. Stern, but very old. Worries herself about nothing; is intensely proud of her sons, but is never satisfied with them. She and Annie, by mutual concession, get on very well together. Dressed in black. Age 67.

MRS. DOWNES.—A widow. A good provincial "body." Stoutish. Has money. Perfectly independent. Very good-natured. Strong common sense. "Dour." Age about 62; but better preserved than Mrs. Worgan.

JAMES BRINDLEY.—A successful manufacturer. Bluff. Kind. No fineness of perceptions. Loud voice. The average sensual man. Age about 46.

EDWARD BRINDLEY.—His son. Nervous, shy, but sturdy in defending his own opinions. Quite boyish in manner. Age 21.

All these people are fundamentally "decent" and sagacious.

JOHN WORGAN'S *library, in his house at Bursley, in the Five Towns. Comfortable. Rather shabby. One striking bookcase; several smaller ones, and odd shelves. Books lying about everywhere. On a desk are a decanter and glasses. Time: Sunday evening, in early July.* FRANCIS *is standing with his back to the fireplace. Enter* MRS. DOWNES, *shown in by a servant.*

MRS. D. [*advancing*]. Is that you, Francis?

FRANCIS. Looks like me, Mrs. Downes, doesn't it? [*They shake hands.*] How are you?

MRS. D. I'm nicely, thank you. Well, you're looking bonny. And I'm right glad to see you're making up a bit for those nineteen years when you never came near the old town.

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FRANCIS. Oh, yes. This makes three visits in eight months. Not so bad, eh?

MRS. D. Eh, if you'd only known how your dear mother missed you, I'm sure you'd have come sooner! For you've got a good heart, that I do know.

FRANCIS. Well, aren't you going to sit down? I'm only a visitor. Emily and I are staying here, you know — but I must do the honours, I suppose. Have this easy chair.

MRS. D. [*sitting*]. Eh, I don't want anybody to do the honours for me in your brother John's house. I lay I know this house better than you do. How do you find your mother?

FRANCIS. Very flourishing.

MRS. D. She *is* wonderful, isn't she, considering her age?

FRANCIS. You and she are as thick as ever, I suppose?

MRS. D. Bless ye, yes! It's many a long year since she and I missed having supper together on a Sunday evening. Two old widows! [*Confidentially.*] My word, she did want to have this supper to-night at her own house! But it would have been too much for her. Your sister-in-law wouldn't hear of it, and she was quite right.

FRANCIS. Of course! What does it matter, after all? The mater only has to step across the road. It's very convenient for her, living so close to John.

MRS. D. [*even more confidentially.*] It saves the situation. Especially as your sister-in-law is so good. But you can understand your mother wanting to have the supper at her own house, can't ye?

FRANCIS. Oh, yes.

MRS. D. [*in a more lively, more ordinary tone*]. And where's the great man?

FRANCIS. Charlie? The fact is, he hasn't come.

MRS. D. [*astounded*]. Not come! But I was told that you and Charlie and Emily were all coming down together yesterday evening by the express.

FRANCIS. So we were to. But Charlie didn't turn up at Euston. Of course, Emily and I came on just the same. No use all three of us making a mess of it! We expected a telegram here last night to say he'd missed the train or something. But no! Not a word!

MRS. D. But what a fearful state your mother must have been in!

FRANCIS [*nodding*]. There came a telegram this morning at eight o'clock — must have been sent off last night — to say he should arrive for lunch. Nothing else.

MRS. D. And he hasn't come yet?

FRANCIS. No.

MRS. D. I wondered why your mother wasn't at church this morning. I said to myself she must be stopping in to talk to Charlie. I never dreamt — and haven't you any idea ——?

FRANCIS. Oh! something unexpected, I suppose! [*Enter* ANNIE.]

ANNIE. Well, Mrs. Downes [*kisses her*], glad you've come early. Nice thing about Charlie, isn't it? Not been near Bursley for seven years, and now playing us this trick!

MRS. D. Eh, my dear! What a state his mother must be in!

ANNIE. I should think so. And the children ill, into the bargain!

MRS. D. The children ill?

ANNIE. Sickening for something. John's examined them. He thinks it may be measles. But he isn't sure. He's just been into the surgery to make something up, and now he's gone across to his mother's to see if there's any fresh news.

MRS. D. And Emily, where is she?

ANNIE. She's in the nursery.

MRS. D. Poor thing! How upset she must be!

ANNIE. Oh, Emily takes it very well. I expect she knows her Charlie. Anyhow, she isn't one to work herself up into a state for nothing.

MRS. D. I'm glad to hear it. What a good thing for him he's marrying a sensible girl! After all, there's none like a Five Towns wife, that I *do* say, go *where* you will. [*Enter* JOHN.]

JOHN [*with false calm*]. Well, he's come. Hello, Mrs. Downes!

MRS. D. Eh, but that's a relief!

JOHN. He's been at the mater's about half an hour. [*Shakes hands absently with* MRS. DOWNES.] It seems he was kept by something unexpected yesterday — something about the *Mercury* — he's very vague. Wired last night, but of course too late for delivery here! Started out in his motor this morning early, and had a breakdown near Tring that lasted seven hours. Cheerful! No telegraph office open in this Christian country! No train! However, he's here, car, chauffeur, and all! He's sent the car down to the Tiger.

ANNIE. I hope he hasn't brought a valet — your mother will worry quite enough as it is.

JOHN. I should think he hadn't. Charlie knows better than that, anyway.

ANNIE. You told him not to dress?

JOHN. Look here, infant! I shouldn't dream of telling him not to dress. He knows perfectly well where he is.

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FRANCIS. Annie, you mustn't forget, even though Charlie is the Shah of Persia, John is his eldest brother and the head of the family.

ANNIE. I was only thinking of all the grand doings he treated me to last time I was up in London. [*To* JOHN.] How long shall we have to wait supper?

JOHN. We sha'n't have to wait supper at all. They'll be across in a minute or two.

FRANCIS. Johnnie wishes you to understand that there's no positive necessity to turn the house inside out merely because Charlie is in the town.

ANNIE. He needn't pretend. He knows he's just as excited and nervous as any one. [JOHN *winks at* FRANCIS, *indicating good-natured scorn of women.*] Have you made up that medicine?

JOHN. Yes, my dove. In spite of my excited and nervous condition I have made up that medicine. Divide it into three equal parts and administer one part to each of your marvellous offspring. You might also relieve Emily's natural anxiety as to her young man.

ANNIE. Come along, Mrs. Downes, and take a peep at the chicks — if you aren't afraid of measles.

MRS. D. Me! [*Exit* MRS. DOWNES *and* ANNIE. JOHN *smiles to himself.*]

FRANCIS. Well, how does he strike you?

JOHN [*condescendingly*]. Oh! he's the same as ever! Now, *he's* nervous, if you like. What would have kept him yesterday, do you know?

FRANCIS. Haven't the least idea.

JOHN. I thought you were in the counsels of the firm now.

FRANCIS. So I am; and it's the most enormous lark that ever was. But I never show myself on Saturday.

JOHN. Lark, is it?

FRANCIS. Well, you can imagine what fun it must be, from the *Mercury*.

JOHN. You don't suppose I read that thing, do you?

FRANCIS. You miss a treat, then. I hadn't used to read it. But now I wouldn't be without it. We've just got a new musical critic. I collect his pearls. Here's one [*takes a cutting from his pocket*] about the concert that Elgar conducted on Friday: "Sir Edward took his men through the initial movement of the 'Dream of Gerontius' at a smart pace. They responded willingly to his baton."

JOHN [*impressed*]. It's too fearfully wonderful, isn't it? I say, what do you think of Elgar, really?

FRANCIS. Tell you in fifty years.

JOHN. I agree with you. [*Loud voice heard outside.*] There's Brindley.

FRANCIS. Oh! He was here last time I was down, wasn't he? Full of stories from the *Winning Post*.

JOHN. Yes, that's the chap. I hope he won't bore you.

FRANCIS. My dear fellow, when one goes to school with a man, one must accept all the consequences.

JOHN. Well, he is a bit heavy. But he's a most frightfully good bridge-player, and he's fond of the kids — and so the wife likes him. I really asked him to-night because of his son, Edward; the youth shows signs of taking to literature.

FRANCIS. D'ye mean to say Jim Brindley has got a grown-up son?

JOHN. Why, it's eighteen years since his wife died. Teddy's a very decent boy. He's writing a play, and he wanted to meet you. I couldn't ask him without his father.

FRANCIS. Have I got to do the swell dramatic critic, then?

JOHN. Well, you know what youths are! [*Enter* BRINDLEY.]

BRINDLEY. How do, John?

JOHN. How do, Jim? Where's the boy? [*They do not shake hands.*]

BRINDLEY. He's coming a bit later. How do, Francis?

FRANCIS [*shaking hands*]. How do, Jim?

BRINDLEY. So you've come down from the village, then?

FRANCIS. Yes. [*Brief awkwardness.*]

BRINDLEY. And where's the great man?

JOHN. Charlie? Oh, he'll be across soon with the mater. He's only just turned up. Came in his motor and had a breakdown.

BRINDLEY. Oh! had a breakdown, did he? What's his make?

JOHN. Motor? Don't know! What is it, Francis?

FRANCIS. Don't know. He's got several.

BRINDLEY. Lucky devil! Did you see that joke in the *Winning Post* yesterday about the chauffeur and the chambermaid?

JOHN. Jimmy, about once a week I have to explain to you that my chief object in life is to avoid seeing the *Winning Post*. Have a drop of vermouth before supper?

BRINDLEY. A split soda's more in my line to-night; but I'll never say die! [*Crosses the room to help himself; as he does so, to* FRANCIS.] You wouldn't think, to hear him talk, that he was as fond of a tasty story as any of us, would you, Francis?

JOHN. You don't know what tasty is, my

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poor James. In the regions of tastiness you've never got beyond a kind of sixth-form snigger.

BRINDLEY. Listen to him! Well, here's luck! [*Drinks.*]

FRANCIS [*amiable for* BRINDLEY'S *sake*]. Doctors, eh, Jim? Doctors!

JOHN. You sniggerers must be having a rare time just now with this Harrisburg M. P. divorce case — three columns or so every day.

BRINDLEY [*at once interested; in a peculiar low voice*]. It is a bit hot, ain't it?

JOHN [*to* FRANCIS]. There! What did I tell you?

BRINDLEY [*approaching the other two, glass in hand*]. But really! yesterday's papers *were* lively. I read several of 'em. The *Mercury* was pretty steep, but the London *Sentinel* was steeper.

FRANCIS. And none of them print all the evidence.

BRINDLEY [*impressed*]. Don't they!

FRANCIS. By Jove, no! Simply daren't! And there's worse to come, it appears.

BRINDLEY. Is there! Well, it's a rare good thing for newspapers. And I suppose they must make hay while the sun shines, same as the rest of us. [*In a still lower voice.*] By the way, seen this? [*Takes a paper from his pocket.*]

JOHN. What is it?

BRINDLEY. *Sunday Morning News.*

JOHN. Never see it.

BRINDLEY. It's one of Master Charlie's papers.

JOHN. But if I had to read all Charlie's papers I should have my hands full.

BRINDLEY. They've been giving a series of "Famous Crimes of Passion" every week now for a long time. They must rake 'em up from old newspapers, I reckon. To-day's is the Ashby-de-la-Zouch double seduction, specially illustrated. In 1881.

JOHN. I always thought there was something sinister about Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

BRINDLEY. And look here.

JOHN [*impatiently*]. What? [*He reads from the paper.*] "Next week. The famous Dick Downes case." What in the name of heaven ——? Francis, do you know anything about this?

FRANCIS [*shakes his head*]. I've scarcely seen the paper except in bundles in the motor-vans. What is the famous Dick Downes case? Downes—— Surely it's nothing to do with ——

JOHN. Don't you remember it? Dick Downes was a Town Councillor of this town. It was a filthy thing. I can recollect as well as anything what a perfect deuce of a sensation it made — must be thirty years ago. Dick Downes was our Mrs. Downes' brother-in-law. He killed himself.

FRANCIS. I believe I have some vague recollection of it.

JOHN. I should say so!

BRINDLEY. Saucy, eh? What'll the old lady say?

JOHN. Charles must be gone right bang off his chump!

BRINDLEY. You may say they titivate these things up. Look at these headings of the Ashby-de-la-Zouch affair. "The virgin's chamber." "The criminal's amorous record." "The psychological moment." "The suppressed letter." "What the doctor said."

JOHN [*glaring at the paper*]. Of course, if they're going to embroider the Dick Downes case in that style——! [*Positively.*] Charlie simply *can't* know anything about it.

FRANCIS. You needn't look at me like that, Johnnie. I'm not the criminal. [BRINDLEY *drops the paper.*]

JOHN. I suppose you don't want that? [*indicating paper*].

BRINDLEY. No. I only brought it in to show you. [*A door opens.*]

JOHN [*picking up the paper and crushing it angrily*]. Just keep your mouth shut, Jimmy. Here's —— [*He pitches the paper into a waste-paper basket. At the same moment enter* MRS. WORGAN *and* SIR CHARLES.]

MRS. W. Well, here we are at last. Good evening, Mr. Brindley. [*General awkwardness.*]

BRINDLEY. Good evening, Mrs. Worgan. [*They shake hands.*] Well, Sir Charles, glad to see ye. [*Shakes hands with* SIR CHARLES.]

JOHN. Look here, Jim, I don't think there's got to be any sirring. Titles are very useful in business, but we don't want to be bored with them here, eh, Charlie?

SIR C. Quite right.

BRINDLEY. You must excuse your brother, Charlie. If he isn't wearing a red necktie it's because he forgot to put it on this morning.

SIR C. [*laughs*]. How do, Francis?

FRANCIS [*nods*]. Well, you're a nice chap!

SIR C. Yes.

MRS. W. What's the latest about the children, John? And where are Emily and Annie?

JOHN. Annie and Emily will be here in a minute, mater. I believe the children are still alive.

MRS. W. John, I do wish you wouldn't talk like that.

SIR C. Measles, I hear!

JOHN. Probably. Sit down, mater.

SIR C. How did they catch it?

JOHN. I'd give a sovereign to know.

SIR C. I see you've got a new under-draught grate there.

MRS. W. Fancy the boy noticing that!

JOHN. Have you noticed my new bookcase?

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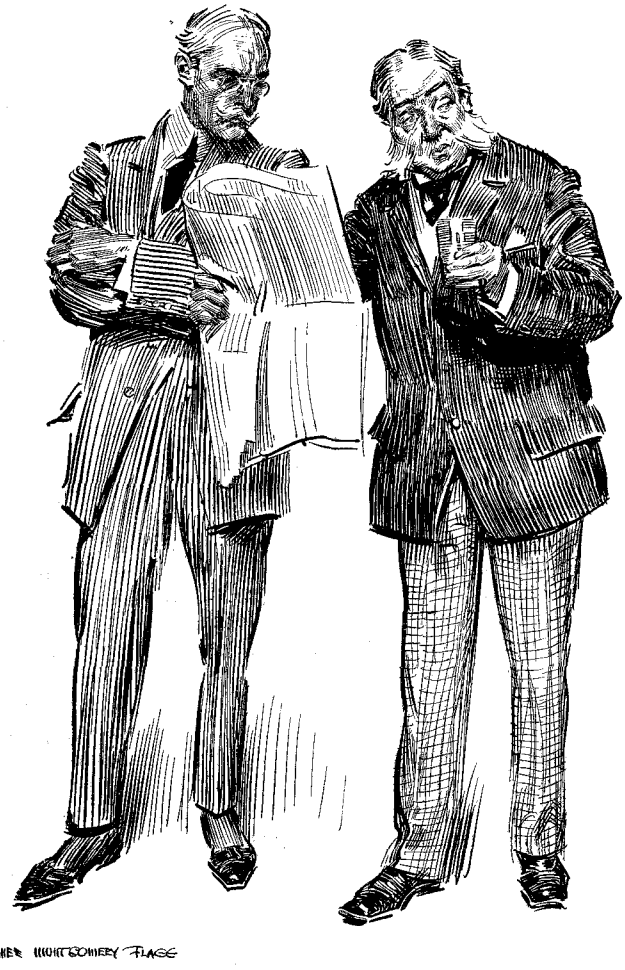

JOHN [*positively*]. CHARLIE SIMPLY CAN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT

SIR C. Ah, yes! Where did you pick that up?

JOHN. Old Harrop's sale. [*General awkwardness increases.*]

BRINDLEY [*to* SIR CHARLES]. So you had a breakdown, eh? What was it? Ignition?

SIR C. Yes. What made you think of that?

BRINDLEY. Well — the weather, you know. I've got a small car myself.

SIR C. Have you?

BRINDLEY [*self-satisfied*]. Oh, yes.

SIR C. What mark? [*They talk.*]

FRANCIS [*in front of bookcase*]. What's this little "Selections from Swinburne," John? I never knew there was any volume of selections.

JOHN. It's the Tauchnitz edition. Do you mean to say you've never had it — you, a traveller?

FRANCIS [*examining book*]. No. So you smuggled it in?

JOHN. I just brought it in. I've got lots of Tauchnitzes.

FRANCIS. Is it any good?

JOHN. Pretty fair! But it only gives part of "Anactoria."

FRANCIS. Oh, be dashed to it, then! [*Puts it back.*]

MRS. W. I wish my sons would be a little more careful in their language.

FRANCIS. Is she shocked? She should not be shocked. [*Goes and kisses her, from behind, with a humorous gesture.*]

MRS. W. [*playfully repulsing him*]. Go away with you!

JOHN. And just look how he's shoved this book back!

SIR C. [*to* BRINDLEY]. And, of course, with no telegraph office open ——!

JOHN [*as he adjusts book on shelf, without turning toward* SIR CHARLES]. Now, *there's* a thing you ought to take up in one of your mighty organs!

SIR C. What, Johnnie?

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JOHN [*turning to him*]. The impossibility of telegraphing after 10 A.M. on Sundays. It's simply criminal. Ask any medical man. You might work it up into one of your celebrated *Mercury* sensations! There'd be some sense in that!

SIR C. No good at all.

JOHN. Why not?

SIR C. No genuine public interest in it.

JOHN. I don't know that there was such a deuce of a lot of genuine public interest in your famous campaign against Germany, my boy.

SIR C. Oh! that's all over now.

MRS. W. Eh, I'm thankful. We don't want any wars.

BRINDLEY. I saw the other day you had a leader saying that friendship with Germany must be the pivot of our foreign policy, or something like that.

SIR C. Well, you see ——

JOHN. Who are you going to war with next, Charlie? You don't seem to have been doing much lately in the boom line, from what I hear.

BRINDLEY. So long as the Harrisburg case is on, I reckon you newspaper people don't want any boom.

MRS. W. Please don't discuss that case, Mr. Brindley.

BRINDLEY. I'm not going to, Mrs. Worgan. I was only wondering what there would be about it in Tuesday's papers.

SIR C. I can tell you what there'll be about it in the *Mercury* — nothing!

BRINDLEY. Really? But —— [*Enter* EMILY *and* ANNIE.]

ANNIE. Ah! Well, he *has* come! How are you, Charles? Glad to see you.

SIR C. [*shaking hands*]. How are you, Annie? Very fit, thanks! You see, I'm not late for supper. [*To* EMILY, *shaking hands.*] I hope you weren't upset?

EMILY. No. Not upset . . . ! But what was it?

SIR C. [*confidentially*]. I'll tell you. . . .

MRS. W. What's this? What's this? Aren't you going to kiss her? Isn't he going to kiss you, my dear, after all this anxiety he's given us?

FRANCIS. Now, Charlie. You must be a man. [SIR CHARLES *and* EMILY *kiss.*]

MRS. W. That's better.

BRINDLEY. Nobody but old friends present. How d'ye do, Mrs. Vernon? [*Shakes hands with her.*] I haven't had time to congratulate Charlie yet. But I congratulate him now. Charlie, my boy, I congratulate you. You've got on to a bit of all right. [SIR CHARLES *nods.*]

ANNIE. Jim, the children want you. Go up at once, because supper will be ready in a minute. Mrs. Downes is there gossiping with the nurse. Bring her down with you.

MRS. W. Mrs. Downes has come, has she? John, you never told me.

ANNIE [*to* BRINDLEY *as he goes*]. We sha'n't wait for Teddy, you know — if he's late.

BRINDLEY. I've no control over Teddy. He offered me a cigar the other day.

MRS. W. I think I'll just go and have one peep at the children [*half rising*].

ANNIE. Now, mother, do give yourself a moment's rest. It isn't two hours since you saw them. And supper's ready.

MRS. W. Very well.

ANNIE [*to* BRINDLEY]. And don't excite them, whatever you do.

BRINDLEY [*at door*]. All right. [*Exit.*]

EMILY [*who has been talking apart with* SIR CHARLES]. But what kept you, so suddenly as all that, my poor boy?

SIR C. Well, there needn't be any secret about it. As a matter of fact, I was just going to tell Brindley. It's that Harrisburg divorce case. Kendrick had heard what Monday's evidence was likely to be, and I sha'n't be there on Monday, so he wanted to consult me as to what should be put in and what should be left out. It's frightfully difficult, as a question of principle.

ANNIE. But how can you decide beforehand?

SIR C. I'll tell you what I decided. I decided we wouldn't report any more evidence at all in either the *Mercury* or the *Courier*.

MRS. W. I'm thankful to hear it, Charles! I must say, some of the things one sees nowadays in the papers ——

SIR C. It's quite time some newspapers made a stand for public decency. And we're going to do it. We shall put it on all the posters: "No report of Harrisburg evidence." No newspaper ever had a poster like that before. It'll do us a tremendous lot of good, and it'll be one in the eye for the *Sentinel*. I thought we ourselves went rather far yesterday, but the *Sentinel* went further. And we've got to beat the *Sentinel* somehow.

ANNIE. I think you've chosen a very good way.

JOHN [*ironically*]. Emily, he *is* a genius. Nobody else would have thought of that.

SIR C. [*half laughing at* JOHN]. So that's how it stands. Of course, we shall run a campaign. I had a great deal of difficulty in making Kendrick see the idea. It took us three hours to thrash it out. I did my level best to catch the last train, and missed it. [*Enter* EDWARD BRINDLEY *shyly.*]

ANNIE. Here he is! Young man, what have you been doing to be late?

JOHN. Teddy has been writing his play, I bet.

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MRS. W. I hope he hasn't forgotten what day it is.

EDWARD. Good evening, Mrs. John; good evening, Mrs. Worgan. [*Shakes hands.*] Sorry I'm late. Good evening [*shakes hands with* JOHN].

JOHN. This is Mrs. Vernon, formerly of the Prince's Theatre, Teddy. This is Francis, dramatic critic of *Men and Women*. And this is Charles, boss of the said theatre. You may be said to be in the theatrical world at last. But don't be nervous. [*To the others.*] Let me introduce Edward Brindley, dramatist. [EDWARD *shakes hands.*]

SIR C. So you want to write plays, do you?

EDWARD [*to* JOHN]. I say, Mr. Worgan, why have you started right off talking about me like this?

ANNIE. People who come late must expect to be conspicuous.

JOHN. Besides, you don't imagine you're asked here to-night in your private capacity, do you? Not a bit. You're asked as a playwright. Why! he's had a play performed at the Drill Hall! It had half a column in the *Signal*, and an uninterrupted run of one night.

EDWARD. Look here, Mrs. John, can't you stop him?

JOHN [*continuing*]. Have you read any of Francis' dramatic criticisms in *Men and Women?*

EDWARD. Yes.

JOHN. What do you think of them?

EDWARD. I think some of them are pretty good.

JOHN. And the others?

EDWARD. Oh — look here, I say!

JOHN. You see how uneven you are, Francis. [*To* EDWARD.] Got your new play in your pocket, Teddy?

EDWARD. Of course I haven't.

JOHN. Well, tell us about it.

EDWARD. Where's the dad?

JOHN. Never mind where the dad is. Perhaps he's under the sofa. Tell us about it.

EDWARD. No.

EMILY. Please *do!*

ANNIE. He's very shy for his age, isn't he?

EDWARD. What do you want me to tell you?

FRANCIS. Well, for instance, what kind of people are there in it?

EDWARD. Oh, just ordinary, common people — like us.

FRANCIS. Not provincials?

EDWARD. Yes. Five Towns people.

FRANCIS. We sha'n't care much for that, we critics.

JOHN. There! What did I tell you?

EDWARD. Why not?

FRANCIS. Why not? Well, you see, we've almost all of us come from the provinces, and we try to forget it. We live in clubs in Pall Mall or Dover Street, and we never leave them until it's time to go to the theatre. We don't even *read* about the provinces, except occasionally in Bradshaw. . . . I suppose you want to make a great success?

EDWARD. Yes.

FRANCIS. Then I should alter the scene to London.

EDWARD. But I don't know anything about London.

FRANCIS. All the better.

EDWARD. I'm sure you're only rotting me. [*To* EMILY.] Isn't he?

EMILY. I don't know. But you stick up for yourself.

FRANCIS. Of course I'm not rotting him. Who *are* the folks in the play?

EDWARD. Well, it's a Wesleyan Methodist set — they're very strong in the town, you know.

FRANCIS. Oh, I see. It's a farce?

EDWARD. No. It's very nearly a tragedy.

FRANCIS [*shakes his head*]. Won't do! Won't have a chance! If you want to make a London audience laugh, you've only got to mention the word Methodist, and the whole house will go into fits.

MRS. W. Really, Francis?

FRANCIS. Yes, mater.

MRS. W. I'm not partial to the Wesleyans myself, but I see no reason for going into a fit when I meet them in the street.

EDWARD [*to* FRANCIS]. But why?

FRANCIS. I suppose they perceive something fundamentally comic in a Methodist. A play full of Methodists would be a great idea for a farce, and I don't think it's ever been done. But if you're on the tragic side at all, you ought to change your Methodists to Church of England. That will at least make people gloomy. I suppose they're very rich — Methodists usually are.

EDWARD. No. They're all poor, except one, and he's a miser. The hero is a rate-collector. And he's supposed to live in one of those new cottages down Brougham Street. It's rather taken from life, you know.

FRANCIS. My poor young man!

EDWARD. I read in one of your articles that what the theatre needs is closer contact with life, anyway! And I've read it in lots of articles!

FRANCIS. Yes, I admit that's how we talk. But let any one try it on, and we're naturally disturbed in our habits, and we don't like it. Is it nearly done, this play?

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EDWARD. It *is* done. I finished it to-night.

FRANCIS. Well, I really don't know what to say! A rate-collector in a new cottage down Brougham Street, Bursley, and all Methodists! Where were you thinking of sending the play, to start with?

EDWARD. I thought I'd try it on George Alexander. I believe in flying high.

FRANCIS. The very man! I never thought of him! [*All laugh.*]

EDWARD [*to* JOHN]. I know you've made it up with your brother to rot me.

JOHN. I assure you, Teddy ——

EDWARD. Oh, yes, you have. But I don't care. I daresay it's awfully bad — in fact, I know it is — but it's like life, and I don't care!

EMILY. Will you let me read it?

EDWARD [*after examining her face*]. Yes. But they told me you'd done with the theatre now.

EMILY. So I have. But I should like to read it.

FRANCIS [*getting up and taking* EDWARD *by the shoulder, in a serious, kind tone*]. Come along, Edward, and let's talk about it somewhere privately. [*A gong.*]

ANNIE. You can't go and talk about it now — supper's ready. [FRANCIS *and* EDWARD *talk apart.*]

JOHN. I notice Charlie shows no rabid desire to let this play be produced at the Prince's. Nothing less than Shakespeare there nowadays! What's become of St. John, by the way?

SIR C. Gone to New York. You ought to come up and see "The Merchant of Venice." It's a colossal success.

JOHN. I've seen it. . . . Saw it last week but one.

SIR C. Really? You should have let me know you were coming.

JOHN. Oh! I was only up for one night. A "G.P." can't go away for six weeks. Your what's-his-name — Cleland — was very polite, and gave me a stall.

SIR C. Clever fellow, Cleland! Very clever! Well, what do you think of it?

JOHN. My dear chap — you're my guest.

SIR C. [*bluffing it out*]. Oh, go ahead, man.

JOHN [*after a pause*]. When St. John had the Prince's, it used to be worth going to.

SIR C. Yes, and till I came he invariably lost money.

JOHN. What does that matter?

SIR C. Exactly! Exactly! "What does that matter?" It's always the way with you superior persons. You want something, but you expect somebody else to pay for it.

ANNIE. John — that's one for you. Supper, please. Come along, mother.

MRS. W. I think there's a lot of wild talk been going on.

JOHN [*as the company is filing out*]. I say, Charlie.

SIR C. Yes.

JOHN. Just a word. You needn't wait for us, mater. Sha'n't be a minute. [MRS. WORGAN *reluctantly follows the others out.* SIR CHARLES *and* JOHN *remain alone.*]

SIR C. What's up?

JOHN [*quite friendly*]. Look here, Charlie, boy, you've been talking about public morals and the *Daily Mercury*. I agree with you in principle, though I think you're quite wrong to suppress the Harrisburg evidence entirely. But what I want to know is: How do you defend the *Sunday Morning News?*

SIR C. [*at a loss for an instant*]. Defend the *Sunday Morning News?* Oh! — it's the "Crimes of Passion" series that you're driving at? [*Laughs.*]

JOHN. It is.

SIR C. Well, you see, that's quite different. It's a question of a different public. There's something funny about the Sunday public —— [*Stops.*]

JOHN. I suppose you mean that when the great and enlightened public has an idle morning to pass, its sole resource is indecency?

SIR C. [*laughing*]. Well, you know what people are. I don't expect anybody could teach you much.

JOHN. But how do you defend that "Crimes of Passion" stuff?

SIR C. I don't defend it. It doesn't need any defending. I simply give our readers what they want. I'm not a guardian of public morals.

JOHN. You pretend to be, in the *Mercury*.

SIR C. Don't I tell you the *Mercury's* different! If I go on the moral lay for a bit in the *Mercury*, that's because I think the *Mercury* public want it. But the Sunday public want something else, and I give it them.

JOHN. How can you be sure they want it?

SIR C. I can be sure because the circulation has gone up a couple of hundred thousand in four months.

JOHN. I was thinking perhaps you didn't know anything about it ——

SIR C. Oh, yes! Naturally, I can't keep an eye on everything. But the main features of policy come from *me* — you may bet on that.

JOHN. Well, something's got to be done.

SIR C. My dear chap, what the deuce are you talking about?

JOHN. I'm talking about Mrs. Downes.

SIR C. What *about* Mrs. Downes?

JOHN. She's in my house. She's playing with my children. She's the mater's oldest

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friend. You'll meet her at supper. And next week in one of your unspeakable papers you're going to rake up old scandals about her family.

SIR C. What ——? [*At a loss.*]

JOHN [*snatches up paper, reads*]. "Next week, the famous Dick Downes case."

SIR C. [*smiles grimly*]. Oh! I didn't know they'd got on to that. Really! As I say, I direct the policy, but I don't see everything. Let's have a look. [*Takes paper and looks at it.*] Yes; it *is* a shade on the side of being awkward, isn't it?

JOHN [*sarcastically*]. A stickler for social conventions might conceivably object to the situation you've created, my boy.

SIR C. She hasn't seen it?

JOHN. Fortunately, no.

SIR C. Well, she won't see it to-night, unless you show it to her. So that's all right. . . . So you read the *Sunday Morning News*, do you? [MRS. WORGAN *appears at door.*]

JOHN [*violently*]. Indeed I don't read the filthy rag. Brindley brought it in to show me.

SIR C. Come, come, Johnnie! You needn't rave. [*Enter* MRS. WORGAN, *who has been listening uneasily at open door.*]

MRS. W. [*advancing, disturbed*]. What's amiss? What's this? What's this about Mrs. Downes?

SIR C. Nothing, mater, nothing.

JOHN. Mater, didn't I tell you to go in to supper?

MRS. W. What are you hiding from me? Charlie, give me that paper.

JOHN [*resigned*]. Better give it her now, and have done with it. It's public enough, in all conscience!

SIR C. Oh, very well. [*Defiantly hands paper to* MRS. WORGAN, *who with difficulty adjusts her spectacles to read it. A pause.*]

JOHN. Bottom of that page, mother — where you are now. [*An awkward pause while she reads.*]

MRS. W. [*much moved*]. Well, Charlie, I'd never have believed it of you. There are lots of things that I deliberately close my eyes to, and a Sunday paper is one of them. But I never dreamt that even in a Sunday paper . . . Raking up the Downes case! . . . [*Weeps.*] I shall fetch Emily. [*Exit quickly.*]

SIR C. It's unfortunate, of course, but these things do happen.

JOHN. There's no real harm done yet. Of course you'll stop it.

SIR C. Stop it! My dear fellow, how can I stop it?

JOHN. Aren't you the boss?

SIR C. It's too late. Those inner sheets will be on the machine to-morrow morning. We have to dovetail in our machining as well as we can. Besides, *why* should I stop it?

JOHN. But you *must* stop it. The thing's unthinkable, utterly unthinkable!

SIR C. It's simply a coincidence, an accident.

JOHN. What's simply an accident?

SIR C. Supposing I hadn't been down here? Supposing Brindley hadn't shown you the paper? You'd never have seen it. Or you'd have seen it too late. And you wouldn't have thought twice about it. But just because I'm here ——

JOHN [*angrily*]. Shouldn't I have thought twice about it!

SIR C. No. After all, what is it? We're just reprinting what was common property twenty-five years ago. It isn't as if it had been kept private till now. How can it affect Mrs. Downes? *She* wasn't in it. Even her husband scarcely appeared in it.

JOHN. Rot! It will be a reflection on the whole Downes family. It must necessarily be very unpleasant for any member of that family.

SIR C. I can't help that. Dick Downes should have thought of that before he began murdering. If I had to be always considering about being unpleasant to people, I should have something to do — with forty papers. Look here, Johnnie. You're awfully clever and intellectual and all the rest of it; but you're looking at this in a rather provincial way. If you'd lived in London more ——

JOHN. Don't be idiotic! London's the most provincial town in England — invariably vulgar, reactionary, hysterical, and behind the rest of the country. A nice sort of place England would be if we in the provinces had to copy London. I'm looking at it in a provincial way, am I? Well, it's a good thing I am!

SIR C. There you go! That's the provincial all over! [*smiling*]. Now, let me put it to you calmly, John. Here, I have an immense organisation ——

JOHN [*savagely*]. To the devil with your immense organisation!

SIR C. I say, I have an immense organisation — an organisation that you've no conception of, perhaps. A paper that sells eleven hundred thousand copies a week. A paper that has a special distributing agent in every town of England. A paper that prints in every issue a sermon by a well-known preacher. A paper that has its Parliamentary sketch written by an M. P. A paper that comes up to the North every Saturday night in a special train — *my* train, with five or six vans full of parcels and my sorters. A paper that's known and read all over the world. One of the most complicated pieces of mechanism in the whole of journalism. And you want me to interfere

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with it just because an old lady happens to be in the same house as I am! [*Snorts.*]

JOHN. My dear chap, I'm not a public meeting. I don't care how vast nor how complicated your mechanism is. What does it matter even if you sell eleven hundred million copies a week? This isn't a mathematical problem. If your vast and complicated mechanism makes it impossible for me to look one of my friends in the face across my supper table, then your vast and complicated mechanism has gone wrong and must be corrected.

SIR C. Nonsense! How can it harm her? It doesn't touch her. All she has to do is not to read it. It isn't so much the expense and the awful inconvenience of stopping the thing that I object to ——

JOHN. Then what do you object to?

SIR C. The principle.

JOHN. Principle! I must say you've got a nerve, you have, to talk about principle!

SIR C. I've got my principles, like anybody else.

JOHN. You've got too many principles, Charlie. That's what's the matter with you. You've got one for the *Mercury* and another for this Sunday rag.

SIR C. Don't be childish! You surely ought to be able to see, with your brains, that I can't be the same in forty different papers. I've no desire at all to ram my personal ideas down the throats of forty different publics. I give each what it wants. I'm not a blooming reformer. I'm a merchant.

JOHN. On Sundays you're a muck-merchant. But you've no right to commit a nuisance.

SIR C. Rubbish! All I do is to reflect the public taste. And that's why the *Mercury*, for instance, is the most powerful newspaper in England to-day.

JOHN. Yes, among errand-boys — I believe.

SIR C. [*really vexed for the first time*]. You needn't talk like that. Of course, *here*, I'm only your brother ——

JOHN. Well, I suppose you are. But I must say I never dreamt you'd make the slightest bother about stopping this monstrous outrage.

SIR C. And I must say I never dreamt you were so hypocritical. Damn it! every one knows all about the public. You stuff 'em with medicine. I give 'em something else. Both of us have to take the public as it is! [*Calming himself.*] No, no, my dear chap, I really must be allowed to conduct my own business.

JOHN. Let me ask you one question. Who gets the profits of this beastliness?

SIR C. I object to the word.

JOHN. Call it angelic pureness, then. Do you? [*Bell rings again.*]

SIR C. You may depend I get most of the profits.

JOHN [*with slow, cutting enunciation*]. And do you think I can allow two people to meet at my table, one of whom is making money out of a gratuitous exposure of painful secrets in the other's life — and that other an old lady? Whether Mrs. Downes knows what you're doing or not is beside the point. She will know it. Can't you see that the situation is absolutely impossible? Or have you got no sense of decency left?

SIR C. Aren't you talking a bit tall?

JOHN. No.

SIR C. Well, then, you mean you'd like me to go? [*Enter* EMILY, *unseen at first by the brothers. She has the newspaper in her hand.*]

JOHN. How can I answer that? There's the mater to think of.

SIR C. Well, I never guessed Bursley was such a hole!

JOHN [*who has seen* EMILY]. Think it over a moment. I'm going into the surgery for a second. [*Half to himself.*] I suppose that confounded supper is waiting. [*Exit.*]

EMILY [*deeply disturbed*]. Charlie!

SIR C. Yes, you may well say "Charlie!" I've brought you into a nice family, upon my soul! I suppose the mater's been telling you about this preposterous business. [EMILY *nods.*] Well, I must confess I'd no idea John was such a frantic prig. . . . Because I run a paper to sell, and I happen to —— No, I'm damned if I can make it out! I'm damned if I can, and that's flat!

EMILY. There's your mother to be thought of. She is very upset indeed.

SIR C. My dear girl, I came down simply to satisfy the mater. That's all right. But I'm not going to have my family interfering with my business. It's too ridiculous. Why doesn't Francis knock some sense into some of 'em? Where is he? Cleared off, of course! That's Francis all over!

EMILY. But, Charlie, don't you think ——

SIR C. Look here, Em, you can't understand these things. I don't expect you to, so far as that goes.

EMILY [*solemnly and stiffly*]. Do you mean to say that you won't put a stop to that Downes case, whatever it costs you?

SIR C. Certainly not! [*After a pause.*] I might just as well be asked to stop the whole series, and fill the pages with extracts from the Acts of the Apostles. [EMILY *is astounded, shocked, and desperate. She does not know what to do, and she hesitates. Then her whole demeanour changes. She approaches* SIR CHARLES *coaxingly, caressingly, putting forth all her*

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ANNIE [*playfully*]. AM I TO BE MISTRESS IN MY OWN HOUSE, OR AM I NOT?

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charm and persuasiveness. She relies on her sensuous power over SIR CHARLES.]

EMILY. Charlie, to please me!

SIR C. No, no [*half repulsing her*]. What you women want is peace at any price. You don't appreciate the argument at all.

EMILY. Dearest, I don't pretend to appreciate the argument. But to please me — it's the first time I've ever asked you to do anything for me. Do! *Do!* To please your Emily [*caressing him*].

SIR C. [*after hesitation*]. Oh, very well, then!

EMILY. And you'll be nice and jolly! You won't look glum! You know how nice you *can* be!

SIR C. [*sighing, half smiling, shakes his head humorously*]. You girls — you simply do what you like. [*Re-enter* JOHN.]

JOHN. Of course, Charles ——

SIR C. That'll do, old chap. I'll stop it. I'll see to it first thing to-morrow morning. Keep your hair on.

JOHN [*looking at him*]. Oh, well, that's all right. [*Enter* ANNIE.]

ANNIE [*taking* SIR CHARLES *by the ear playfully, but with a certain concealed exasperation*]. Come along! Am I to be mistress in my own house or am I not? Never did I know such a family of arguers as you Worgans. But if you think I'm going to have my supper spoiled, you are mistaken. Come along, you others. [*Exeunt* ANNIE *and* SIR CHARLES, *followed by* JOHN. EMILY *is left alone. Enter* MRS. DOWNES.]

MRS. D. [*hurrying*]. Bless us, I hope I'm not keeping everybody. Are they gone in? And I haven't shaken hands with the great man yet.

EMILY. Mrs. Downes, I just want to tell you ——

MRS. D. Eh, what's amiss?

EMILY. If anybody says anything to you about — about something in the *Sunday Morning News* — it isn't true. I mean it's been stopped. Charlie didn't know about it; he's ——

MRS. D. Eh, bless ye, my dear. Do you suppose I don't know about *that?* Why, half a dozen different people took the trouble to tell me about it before nine o'clock this morning! But I make naught of it. I know what those Sunday papers are! No respectable person would *look* at one of them. You say Charlie didn't know — you'll excuse my plain speaking, my dear, but he ought to have known! . . . There's only one thing that puts me about, and that is — what will his poor mother think? [*Goes toward door, then returns to* EMILY.] My dear, I do hope you'll be able to influence him for good. [*Exit.* EMILY's *face is a study. Enter* FRANCIS.]

FRANCIS. I say, the missis is getting cross. Hello! You surely aren't crying?

EMILY [*crying*]. No.

FRANCIS. Look here. I don't really see what you've got to be upset about. John and Charlie are simply behaving like angels to each other. The whole bother is settled satisfactorily, and I've no doubt it's you that did it. The fact is, you ought to be proud; you convinced him.

EMILY. No, I didn't convince him. I only caressed him.

FRANCIS. Well, I suppose this supper must be eaten. [*Movement toward door.*]

CURTAIN

ACT IV

Scene: Same as Act I. Time: Afternoon. SIR CHARLES *and* KENDRICK *are sitting together.*

SIR C. [*handing document to* KENDRICK]. I think that'll do, for a draft. Be sure to have it typed with wider spaces between the lines this time, so that I can see to read it better. Shareholders don't like hesitations, especially in figures.

KENDRICK. Yes, I'll attend to that.

SIR C. [*rubbing his hands*]. Well, now there's the question of new developments, Kendrick.

KENDRICK. I should have thought we'd developed enough to satisfy anybody, for the moment.

SIR C. My boy, when I read that report, showing a dividend of thirty per cent, and a reserve of four hundred thousand pounds, and a total annual circulation of seven hundred million copies, what do you suppose will be the first thought in the minds of the shareholders? Gratitude? Not much! Their very first thought will be that we ought in mere justice to give 'em thirty-five per cent next year instead of thirty.

KENDRICK. Greedy swine!

SIR C. By the way, talking of circs., how much did you say the religious department had fallen as a whole?

KENDRICK. Twenty-three thousand.

SIR C. There's pretty certain to be some awkward questions as to our row with the Bishop of London. I must think that

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over. What's the paragraph in the report, exactly?

KENDRICK [*reading*]. "Your directors have pleasure in stating that, despite much unfair and not disinterested criticism, the religious journals of the company have, while conserving their high character, more than maintained their circulations, and that this important department of your activities is in an extremely satisfactory condition."

SIR C. So it is, considering the extraordinary slump in religion — which I hope to heaven is only temporary. You've sacked the Reverend Mr. Haliburton?

KENDRICK. No. Not yet.

SIR C. Kendrick, I believe you've got a weakness for that chap. [*With emphasis.*] He must be sacked.

KENDRICK. I've got no weakness for him. But who's going to take his place?

SIR C. *I* am — for the next three months! That satisfy you?

KENDRICK. Oh! all right, then! He'll never get another shop, you know.

SIR C. You needn't tell me he's growing old. I don't care if he's ninety and the only support of his aged mother. He doesn't understand religion, and so he's no use to us. [*Softening.*] You might offer him a sub-editorship, if you like. There's something vacant on *Racing Illustrated*, isn't there?

KENDRICK. Think he'd accept it?

SIR C. He'd accept it right enough. Besides, there's no compulsion. He can leave it if he likes. Now, listen. About new developments! [*With an important air.*] I've got something!

KENDRICK. Yes?

SIR C. The *Daily Mercury* and the *Courier* are going to become the militant organs of the women's suffrage. You understand — the militant organs.

KENDRICK. It's an idea!

SIR C. I should think it was an idea!

KENDRICK. And what about the *Courier's* celebrated question after the big House of Commons raid six months ago?

SIR C. What question?

KENDRICK. "Why not revive the ducking-stool?"

SIR C. Did we say that?

KENDRICK. We said it across four columns. It'll want some explaining away.

SIR C. Oh, no! We've been converted, that's all. Quite simple. Just see how public opinion has changed! We shall be the first really to take the thing up.

KENDRICK. Why! there's at least a dozen dailies that have been in favour of women's suffrage right through!

SIR C. Yes, but they don't count. Kendrick, how dull you are! When I say "take the thing up," I mean *take it up*. See?

KENDRICK. Oh! You mean *run it*.

SIR C. I do.

KENDRICK. A bit dangerous, isn't it?

SIR C. My dear fellow, if I wasn't sure that it's all over except the shouting I wouldn't touch it with my foot. But it's an absolute cert. And this is just the moment for us to come in and rake up the glory. It's now or never.

KENDRICK. Mrs. Vernon is a suffragist, she was telling me not long since.

SIR C. Oh, yes, naturally!

KENDRICK. You ought to write to Lady Calder and get *her* to do something. She's frightfully keen on it.

SIR C. No, I'm not going to write to Lady Calder. She'd be coming here. She'd be a nuisance.

KENDRICK. She'd be very useful, with her standing. Of course, I know she used to — sort of — as it were, run after you. But as you're engaged now — her hopes ——

SIR C. My dear chap, I'm not going to write to Lady Calder. She's one of the kind that never give up hope till you're dead. We can manage this campaign without Lady Calder. Now, the first thing is — there are six suffragettes in Holloway. The *Mercury* has got to get 'em out. We must begin on the Home Secretary.

KENDRICK. Yes; but —— [*Enter* PAGE-BOY *with a card.*]

SIR C. [*impatiently*]. What's the use of the red disk being up? [*Taking card.*] Oh! Run down and tell his lordship I'm coming. [*Exit* BOY. SIR CHARLES *gets up and takes his hat.*] It's Lord Henry Godwin. He wants me to go down to him [*taking stick and gloves*]. I think I know what it is —— [*Enter* FRANCIS.]

FRANCIS. I say, Charlie.

SIR C. Can't stop now. Sha'n't be long, I expect. [*Exit* SIR CHARLES. *He hurries, but tries to appear deliberate.*]

FRANCIS. I was going to tell my brother that you had better look out for another dramatic critic for *Men and Women*, Kendrick.

KENDRICK. Really? I'm sorry to hear that. Doctor been forbidding you to go out at night?

FRANCIS. No! It's simply that I can't stand that capricious widow any longer.

KENDRICK. Capricious widow? What capricious widow?

FRANCIS. The capricious widow. I came up specially yesterday from a holiday in the Five Towns to go to the new piece at the Globe, and there she was once more! She's been in nearly

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every play I've seen, and she gets worse and worse.

KENDRICK. I see — you're joking again.

FRANCIS. Indeed I'm not! That eternal widow's charm, beauty, wilfulness, freaks, pranks, crotchets, and skirt-whiskings are having a serious effect on my constitution. I feel that if I am to be condemned to see her again, I ought to take the precaution of writing my obituary before I go to my execution.

KENDRICK. Well, speaking for myself, all I say is [*in a low voice*], give me a music-hall. [*Enter* PAGE-BOY, *who announces* MRS. VERNON.]

FRANCIS. Mrs. Vernon! Sir Charles isn't here; but ask her to come in.

KENDRICK. You'd better give your notice to Sir Charles. [*Exit. Enter* EMILY.]

FRANCIS. Hello, Em! [*Shakes hands.*] What's the meaning of this?

EMILY. What's the meaning of what?

FRANCIS. You being here. I thought you were staying with the mater till the end of the week, to make up for Charlie's absence.

EMILY. N-no. It wasn't definitely understood. [*They sit down.*]

FRANCIS. I suppose you couldn't stand it any longer. I don't blame you. It must be very trying for a woman to have to stay with the family of her future husband. The fact is, some one ought to apologise to you on behalf of the family, and I'm inclined to do it myself.

EMILY. Don't be affected, Francis. You know as well as I do that John and his wife are just my sort of people, and I'm sure that nobody could have been kinder than your mother.

FRANCIS. Well, as a matter of fact, I suppose we *did* come through Sunday night rather well. After the shindy, the supper was really a credit to every one concerned. I was proud of us all. . . . I expect these episodes must happen in all families. . . . Still, I felt relieved, you know, when Charlie announced on Monday morning that he could only do what John wanted by coming to town himself. And, to be candid, Em ——

EMILY. Oh, Frank — with your candour . . . !

FRANCIS. I wasn't what you may call sorry when I had to come back myself on Tuesday for that play. I was only sorry after I'd seen the play. By the bye, I've decided to give up dramatic criticism.

EMILY. Why?

FRANCIS. I'll tell you. I can't stand the wise, gentle, cunning, well-dressed philosopher of fifty. I assure you, I can't *stand* him.

EMILY. Which one?

FRANCIS. There is only one. He is appearing simultaneously in eleven West-End theatres. I don't mind Sherlock Holmes; I don't mind Rufus Isaacs; I don't mind Marcus Aurelius. But when these three are all tied together with a piece of string and multiplied by eleven, I find the phenomenon very bad for my nervous system. No money is worth the strain.

EMILY. Told Charlie?

FRANCIS. No. I came here to break the news to him, but he was just going out. I'm surprised you didn't meet him at the lift.

EMILY. I walked up. Has he gone for the day?

FRANCIS. Oh, no! He said he should be in again soon. Better wait if you feel you can't live much longer without seeing him. When did you arrive?

EMILY. I've just come.

FRANCIS. Straight here from Euston?

EMILY. Yes.

FRANCIS [*after a pause*]. Now, look here, Em. What's happened? You and I are pals.

EMILY. My dear Francis, *nothing* has happened.

FRANCIS. Mater hasn't been making herself unpleasant?

EMILY. Oh, Francis, how tiresome you are!

FRANCIS. I was only thinking she might have been preaching morals at Charlie through you.

EMILY. Not at all. Charlie has scarcely been mentioned.

FRANCIS. And Charlie and you have kept the peace?

EMILY. You and I saw him off on Monday morning, didn't we?

FRANCIS. Yes. The parting seemed to lack none of the proper ceremonies. And no doubt since then you've exchanged letters.

EMILY. We've scarcely had time to exchange letters; but he's written to me, since you are so curious.

FRANCIS. Curiosity is my greatest virtue. Not had time! [*Pause.* EMILY *shuts her lips.*] I hope his letter was all that it ought to be.

EMILY [*ironically smiling*]. Would it interest you to read it?

FRANCIS. Because I gather vaguely that he spent most of Monday in massacring the whole staff. Yesterday he was less homicidal. To-day he is like an archangel. By the way, he hasn't stopped that series altogether — in the *Sunday Morning News*. He's just changed the Downes case for some other case. I suppose you knew?

EMILY. No, I didn't.

FRANCIS. There are some things that Charlie doesn't *see*.

EMILY. What do you mean?

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SIR C. [*looking at her hand*]. YOU JUST TAKE A THING INTO YOUR HEAD, AND IT'S ALL OVER AND DONE WITH!

FRANCIS. I mean he has a blind spot.

EMILY [*sarcastically*]. And you haven't enlightened him?

FRANCIS [*also sarcastically*]. No. We must leave that to you. You are the only person who can enlighten him — with your caresses! [*very slightly accentuating the last word.*]

EMILY. Frank, truly I don't know what's come over you to-day. You say we're pals, but ——

FRANCIS. Em! [*With an impulsive slight movement toward her. Enter* SIR CHARLES, *who is very surprised to see* EMILY.]

EMILY [*self-consciously*]. Well, Charles, I'm here, you see. [FRANCIS *makes a gesture to indicate that he perceives he is in the way, and exit.*]

SIR C. So this is why there was no letter from you this morning!

EMILY [*as he approaches*]. Better not kiss me.

SIR C. Oh!

EMILY. I've got a cold. [*In a firmer tone, as he still approaches and seizes her hands.*] No, really! I mean it!

SIR C. [*with a gesture of uncomprehending submission*]. Nothing wrong, eh? I hope the mater hasn't been ——

EMILY. Now please don't say all that Francis has just been saying. It's extraordinary how each of you Worgans imagines that the rest of the family is impossible to get on with. Your mother and I agreed perfectly.

SIR C. That's absolutely all right, my dear girl. [*Sits down near her.*] I was only wondering why you'd come back so suddenly.

EMILY. Suddenly? I slept four nights in Bursley. One night was enough for you.

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SIR C. It *is* a hole, isn't it? Well, anyhow, I'm glad you're here. News, my child, news!

EMILY. Indeed?

SIR C. Did you see a carriage and pair at the door when you came in?

EMILY. Yes.

SIR C. Lord Henry Godwin's. He won't have a motor, you know. He sent up to ask me to go down and speak to him.

EMILY. I understood you and he weren't on speaking terms — after — after that epigram of his.

SIR C. Oh! errand-boys? What do I care for his epigrams — now that it suits me to play up to him?

EMILY. I should have thought that he might have come up here to see you, instead of you going down to his carriage.

SIR C. Gout. And he was in a deuce of a hurry. Besides — the point is that his uncle is Chancellor of Oxford University. It was his uncle who sent him to me. They want to make me an honorary D.C.L.

EMILY. What for?

SIR C. Well, considering that I'm by far the largest subscriber to their special fund! . . . D.C.L. of Oxford? That's something, you know. I only wish it could be conferred before our annual meeting. It would make some of them sit up, that would — a D.C.L. of Oxford presiding over a meeting of Worgan shareholders! It would show some of 'em I'm getting there, all the same. Em, that idea of yours, of me giving something handsome to the 'Varsity, was the greatest idea you ever had.

EMILY. It wasn't my idea at all.

SIR C. Oh, stuff! Don't be modest! [*Nods his head with slow content.*] D.C.L. of Oxford, eh? I've known for some time that they were thinking of it.

EMILY. What does D.C.L. stand for?

SIR C. [*slightly taken aback*]. It's Doctor of something. [*Rises to consult a book.*]

EMILY. I suppose so.

SIR C. [*shutting book with a snap*]. Doctor of Civil Law, that's it! [*Sits down.*] Well, I shall be a Doctor of Civil Law. And I'm running the Prince's, which has always been considered the most intellectual theatre in London. What's more, I'm running it at a profit. [*A pause.* EMILY *makes no remark.*] And there's another thing I must tell you. I'm going to run women's suffrage for all it's worth in both the *Mercury* and the *Courier*. Yes, I decided that in the train on Monday morning. I've been thinking it over ever since. You're quite right — all the cleverest men are on that side, and of course it's bound to win. It'll be positively popular in six months' time. Don't you think so?

EMILY. I don't know about it being popular.

SIR C. [*a little dashed*]. Don't you? [*Decisively.*] Well, anyhow, I shall take the risk. I'll *make* it popular. And to begin with — I've settled one thing in my own mind — if your little friends the raiders aren't let out of Holloway quick, the Home Secretary will have to be shifted.

EMILY. Shifted?

SIR C. And the *Mercury* will shift him.

EMILY. But it isn't his fault. Everybody knows that.

SIR C. I don't care. He's the figure-head, and he must suffer.

EMILY. But what shall you *do?*

SIR C. I shall run a campaign against him, of course; a *Mercury* campaign! You'll see, you'll see! I say — what about that house in South Audley Street?

EMILY. House in South Audley Street? Oh, yes; you mentioned one in your letter.

SIR C. I want us to go and look at it at once. The fact is, Em, I'm simply dying to see you doing the hostess in my drawing-room. I haven't *begun* yet, and I want to begin, and I can't till we're married. Let's go along to South Audley Street now, eh, as you're here? I feel like a spree!

EMILY. Oh, not now!

SIR C. Why not?

EMILY. I didn't come here to go to South Audley Street.

SIR C. [*looking at her*]. Vexed, is she? I fancied there was something wrong.

EMILY. No. I'm not at all vexed [*shortly*].

SIR C. [*good-humouredly, cajolingly*]. Well, you surely aren't going to sit there and tell me that life is a dream of bliss at the present moment. What was afoot between you and Francis when I came in?

EMILY. Nothing.

SIR C. Come, now, there must be something. What is it? What was he telling you, or you him? You were as thick as thieves.

EMILY. Really, he told me nothing — except that you'd suppressed the Downes case.

SIR C. Well, as I'd promised to suppress it ——!

EMILY. But that you were continuing the series.

SIR C. Oh! that's it, is it? Great Scott! Great Scott! Now, listen, Em. I don't want to argue. I prefer not to. But if you've still got that matter on your mind I'll suppress the whole blessed series. I can't stop next week's because by this time three quarters of it is

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printed off, but the series shall end there. Simply to please you!

EMILY [*curtly*]. I don't want you to do anything simply to please me.

SIR C. [*hurt*]. I like that — I like that, I must confess! What did you say on Sunday night? You admitted you couldn't appreciate the argument, and you asked me to stop the article just to please you. You said it was the first time you had ever asked me to do anything for you. And I gave in at once. I thought you were satisfied. Well, it seems you aren't. I offer to give in further, simply to please you, though I'm taking hundreds of pounds out of my shareholders' pockets and acting against my own judgment into the bargain, and you try to sit on me by saying that you don't want me to do anything simply to please you. What do you want? Whatever it is, you shall have it. I've no intention of bickering with you. That's not my style. But I should like to know where I stand.

EMILY. I hate the thought of you doing anything simply to please me — I hate it!

SIR C. Then why did you ask me to, on Sunday?

EMILY [*bursting out*]. Can't you see? Because there was nothing else to be done! You must be blind! The situation was simply unspeakable. It *had* to be brought to an end. And there was only that way of bringing it to an end. You weren't open to argument. You seemed to have no notion at all of what people's feelings were. So I just had to wheedle you into it! To wheedle you into it!

SIR C. [*laughing slightly and easily*]. Oh! that was it? Well, you had the best of me. It just shows how you can twist me round your little finger when you want to. That's all right! I make you a present of it.

EMILY. No. It isn't all right. It's because I feel it isn't all right that I've come back today — and straight here from the station! That's why I didn't answer your letter — because if I'd written I should have had to say something that I'm — well, I suppose it's too proud, yes, too proud not to tell you like this, face to face.

SIR C. And what's that?

EMILY. It would be a mistake for us to marry.

SIR C. [*incredulous*]. Do you mean to say you want to throw me over?

EMILY. I don't think we ought to marry.

SIR C. [*after a pause*]. When did you begin to think that?

EMILY. On Sunday night.

SIR C. *I* don't know what you're driving at, and that's flat! Here I do exactly what you ask, and before I know where I am I'm to be chucked! Because you can simply do what you like with me, you want to chuck me! I'm glad I never pretended to understand women, anyway!

EMILY. It isn't a thing that can be argued about, Charlie. I've thought it over very carefully, and I'm perfectly sure that it will be best for us to break off. Of course, I'm awfully sorry. It's very awkward for both of us. And it's nobody's fault. I'm certain we shouldn't do ourselves any good by discussing it. So let's leave it at that.

SIR C. No! I'm damned if I'll leave it at that! I've always played the game with you, and I expect you to play the game with me. I say I *expect*. *I've* done nothing that I'm ashamed of.

EMILY. I don't think you have. That's just the trouble.

SIR C. What's just the trouble?

EMILY. We differ as to the precise point where shame ought to begin.

SIR C. I don't see —— [*Stops.*]

EMILY [*hotly*]. Of course you don't. You needn't tell me that! Do you imagine that if I thought you saw, I should be talking to you like this? Not exactly! I should simply have returned your ring with my compliments.

SIR C. [*sarcastically*]. I've no doubt I'm a very odd person, but ——

EMILY [*approaches him*]. You *are*, Charlie! A man that could hold out as you did against your brother on Sunday night must be — well, as you say, odd. I ought to have guessed it earlier. But I didn't. You see, I'm being frank with you.

SIR C. Oh, I see *that!* . . . [*Disgustedly.*] Of course, it's no use talking a lot of rot to you about reconsidering your decision and all that. . . . I suppose it's occurred to you that you're making a fearful mess of my affairs?

EMILY. I'm quite sure that I'm avoiding a fearful mess.

SIR C. That's all very fine! That's all very fine! There are some things that I can't talk about. . . . I can't talk about love, for instance. But let me tell you, you don't know what a fearful mess you're making!

EMILY. I'm sorry.

SIR C. No, that's just what you aren't. You're glad. You're glad to be out of it. You're jolly glad you've told me and got it over. You look down on me, and I don't know why, upon my soul! You're quite different when you talk to Francis or John. And yet, I'm the cleverest chap in our family, by a long chalk. I could wipe the floor with either of my intellectual brothers, any day.

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EMILY. Charlie, I wish you wouldn't talk like that. I don't look down on you.

SIR C. I'll swear you do. . . . And all this, if you please, because of a newspaper article, one single newspaper article. Where's the common sense of it? You knew all about me before we were engaged.

EMILY. I didn't understand what your system meant.

SIR C. My system! . . . Supposing I say to you that I'll throw up the entire business, leave journalism altogether — and be content to enjoy myself on the miserable interest of a million and a half in first-class securities — what price that for an offer, eh? I'm not much of a drawing-room singer, but what price that for an offer? Will that satisfy you?

EMILY. No; I could never agree to such a thing. It would be madness.

SIR C. Now I'm mad! Naturally! Well, you've taken it into your head to ruin my show, and that's an end of it! All I have to do is to shut up and look pleasant. I kept off women for forty years, and I wish to God I'd kept off 'em for forty-one. I might have known.

EMILY [*holding out her hand*]. Good afternoon, Charlie.

SIR C. [*looking at her hand*]. You just take a thing into your head — and, *pstt*, it's all over and done with in a minute!

EMILY [*moving away*]. I should think better of you if you didn't go on in this way. You seem to forget that I suffer too.

SIR C. [*more and more carried away*]. And whose fault is that? Is it mine?

EMILY. When you talk about "just taking it into my head," you are insulting [*moving toward door*].

SIR C. [*bitterly*]. That's it! Try to put me in the wrong! But you can't. I've not changed. I've never made any pretensions. I've never hidden anything. I've never said I was a moralist. I've never posed as being better than other people. But I've always maintained the right of the public to have what they want, and my right to give 'em what they want.

EMILY. Sell — not give.

SIR C. Sell, then.

EMILY. No matter what they want?

SIR C. Certainly, so long as it's legal! Supply must meet demand!

EMILY. Yes, and I do believe if the sacred public wanted your wife you'd meet the demand! [*Exit.* SIR CHARLES *walks about and lights a cigarette. Enter* KENDRICK.]

KENDRICK. Oh, you are back!

SIR C. Yes; what is it?

KENDRICK. Well, about this new campaign?

SIR C. [*sits down*]. Sit down. I'll tell you. Can you put your hand on any of those limerick clerks we had to get rid of?

KENDRICK. I should think it's quite possible.

SIR C. Well, you might get hold of twenty or so.

KENDRICK. What for?

SIR C. For correspondence. It's like this. There are four hundred and fifteen M.P.'s who have declared themselves in favour of women's suffrage. And yet nothing is done. Every damned one of those hypocritical rotters has got to be brought fairly to bay, in his own constituency, not here in London, but where he can be frightened.

KENDRICK. You may say without exaggeration that this'll be a bit of a job.

SIR C. Yes, it'll keep a few of you employed.

KENDRICK. Mr. Francis would be useful, I should think. Has he told you he means to stop doing dramatic criticism?

SIR C. No. By the way —— [*Hesitates, as if at a loss.*] See here, Kendrick, I'll go on with this later. I was forgetting. [*Stops again.*] To-morrow morning, eh? [*Rises.*]

KENDRICK [*rather puzzled*]. All right. What time?

SIR C. Ten o'clock. [KENDRICK *nods and exit.* SIR CHARLES *opens door.*]

SIR C. I say, Frank.

FRANK [*off*]. Hello?

SIR C. I just want to speak to you a minute. [*Enter* FRANCIS.]

FRANCIS [*self-consciously and hesitatingly*]. Well? [*He shuts door carefully.*]

SIR C. [*after hesitation*]. I hear you intend to give up theatrical criticism?

FRANCIS. Yes.

SIR C. What's the meaning of this new move?

FRANCIS [*with a jocular appearance of being confidential*]. The fact is, I've come to the conclusion I can't stand the actor-manager any longer.

SIR C. Can't stand the actor-manager?

FRANCIS. Merely to see him in his magnificent splendour makes me feel such a worm that it's positively bad for my health. I've stood him as long as I can.

SIR C. I suppose this is a hint that you'll be leaving us altogether soon?

FRANCIS. Well, I never gave you the idea that I should be a permanency, did I? And, really, overhauling obituaries isn't what you'd

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call a feverish joy. As soon as I've got down to W, and attended to you and myself, Lewis Waller, James Welch, John Strange Winter, Wilbur Wright, A. B. Walkley, Mrs. Humphry Ward, and a few other important people, it's quite on the cards that I may resume my travels. You've given me a unique time, and taught me all that I didn't know about human nature. Also I've accumulated a pile of money.

SIR C. That's it — you'd better all go together!

FRANCIS. What do you mean?

SIR C. [*in a low voice*]. Emily has thrown me over.

FRANCIS. Look here, Charlie. Of course, as I'm your brother, I can't boil over in sympathy; but I'm very sorry — really. [*Pause.*]

SIR C. You don't seem exactly staggered.

FRANCIS. N-no. Besides, I knew.

SIR C. Knew? How did you know?

FRANCIS. She's just told me. She came straight into my room.

SIR C. How did she come into your room?

FRANCIS. By the corridor, naturally. She's in there now.

SIR C. Hm! And I suppose you were discussing me inside out. I must say that with *you* Emily was always more ——

FRANCIS. No, no! She simply came to consult me about a question that is naturally very much on her mind.

SIR C. What's that — if I'm not being too curious?

FRANCIS. The question of how she is to earn a living, of course! She hasn't a cent, and she's no prospects. She's in a devilish awkward hole.

SIR C. [*after a pause, quietly*]. That's true, and I can't offer her anything. . . . I say, Frank, you must fix that up for me, somehow. It'll have to be done very delicately.

FRANCIS. As you say, very delicately.

SIR C. Of course I can easily find her something pretty handsome — some place that'll keep her for life.

FRANCIS. I don't imagine she'll need it for quite that long.

SIR C. Not need it ——

FRANCIS. Well, it'll be a miracle if a woman like Em doesn't marry some one before she's very much older.

SIR C. What does that mean?

FRANCIS. How do I know? [*They look at each other.* FRANCIS *moves toward door.*]

SIR C. Where are you going?

FRANCIS. I can't leave her in there alone indefinitely.

SIR C. [*after a pause*]. It'll be a lesson to me, I can tell you.

FRANCIS. What will?

SIR C. All this! I've done with you superior, intellectual people. I'm going right away on the other tack now. As regards journalism, you shall cater for yourselves.

FRANCIS. Oh! I expect we shall manage to do that.

SIR C. I don't care if every friend I have leaves me!

FRANCIS. My dear fellow, the great British public is your friend. What more do you require?

SIR C. You may laugh. But nobody can stop me from going ahead, and I shall end in the House of Lords. [*Prepares to speak into dictaphone.*]

FRANCIS. It's the very place for you, Charlie. No sensible person would think of trying to stop you from going ahead right *into* the House of Lords. You keep on giving the public what it wants just as long as ever you can. That's your mission in life. Only prepare for the rainy day.

SIR C. What rainy day?

FRANCIS. The day when the public wants something better than you can give it. [*Exit.*]

SIR C. [*into dictaphone*]. My dear Lady Calder ——

CURTAIN

THE END

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"SHE WAS THE MADONNA OF MY IDOLATRY"

THE INFLUENCE

BY

ETHEL M. KELLEY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROSE CECIL O'NEILL

THERE never was a baby with a prenatal influence like our baby's. For, from the moment that Jean realized the imminence of Sylvia's arrival in the world, she gave up her life to protecting, developing, and encouraging that influence. It was the thing that she lived by for the brief and busy months that antedated our offspring's advent, the months that Jean declared were not half long enough to get the influence all in. But with such potency did her mother invoke the atmosphere of subtle and seraphic peace that surrounded us that, when at last Sylvia opened her rosebud mouth on a June world, with the large and lazy yawn that was her first recognition of the existence to which she had committed herself, she had not so much as the shadow of a prenatal discomfiture to bless herself with.

"She ought to be a perfect baby," said Jean, brushing her lips across the fairy down on the top of Sylvia's head. "I never so much as sighed once while I was expecting her—Mother's bless-ums!"

The baby's pink toes, which Jean had been exhibiting to me for something like the seventeenth time that morning, curled complacently, as if her mother's remark were agreeable to her.

"I don't know about her being perfect, Jean," I said, "but I am sure that I never saw a baby before that looked so *bland*."

"But, now that it is all over," my wife con-

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tinued, and her eyes widened with a wistfulness not altogether consistent with the remark that was to follow, "I feel as if I should like to relax a little. I've been harmonious and high-minded so long that I feel as if I should burst. I want to be bad."

But at this juncture Jean was interrupted by a wail, the first wail to which our daughter had given utterance since her entrance into the family circle — a wail so poignant and prolonged that Jean flew to her rescue in genuine alarm. And, in soothing the little cry that is like no imitable sound in all the world, she forgot what more she was about to say.

But my heart had lightened curiously to her confession. In the angel of sweetness and light who had been moving among us for the past few months I had scarcely been able to discern a trace of the wife I had married. My blithe, dimpling little Jean had merged into a being serene and gracious, wrapped about with an almost perceptible halo of glory, who was getting herself ready to be the mother of Sylvia. And, in spite of the difficulty of drawing my breath at such an altitude, I was never guilty of the sacrilege of wishing her otherwise. She was the madonna of my idolatry, and I worshiped her. I had not understood that the beginning of life was a matter of so much miracle and mystery. I was as one in the perpetual attitude of prayer; but, when the months had passed and the ordeal was bravely over, I found myself in the position of a man getting somewhat stiffly up from his knees.

Sylvia, actually among us, swung in her bassinet, and, attempting to scratch a perfect but infinitesimal ear entirely off her head, was not to be taken quite so seriously. She was no longer the vague sprite of our dim dream, the miracle not yet manifest, which we had hardly dared believe might be for us, but a tangible human asset, a somewhat comic bit of underdone personality that we admired heartily, with some mental reservations.

As the *Hawkville Carrier* duly chronicled, "A little stranger had entered the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Sylvanus Blankhurst," and, like all strangers on a nearer inspection, had proved to be, in spite of a certain difference in quality, very much like all the other people in the world. After all, though, somewhat to my surprise, we were bigger than she was. And I confessed, in the face of the accomplished fact, I was conscious of a feeling of flatness, of ennui, almost. Here was Sylvia, and here were we. I had caught the car of parenthood and was sitting on the front seat. The excitement was over.

But the possibility of Jean's sharing my state of mind had not occurred to me. I thought of her as being borne ever higher and higher on the tide of maternity, leaving me further behind her with each experiencing hour; and it was only when she actually confessed her own state of mind that I began to hope that our mutual achievement might not involve the perpetual adjusting of the halo to my unworthy head.

"Jean," I said, resuming our interrupted conversation, "I am with you. As soon as you are up, put on your flame-colored gown cut too low down the back, and go as far as you like.

"'I FEEL AS IF I SHOULD LIKE TO RELAX — I WANT TO BE BAD'"

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There is not only a bottle and a bird included in this prescription, but a motor-car, and I'll be d——"

The scream from our infant daughter at this point was so shrill as to be almost human in its significance.

"John," said my wife in a queer little shamed voice, "don't swear before the baby."

It was not until several days later that we took up the subject again; for, every time we had tried to talk of our reversion, as Jean called it, our daughter had interrupted us with one of her rare periods of weeping. This was all the more curious because Sylvia was not a crying baby. She had the most seraphic expression of any baby I have ever seen. She was Cedric Errol and Little Eva and Paul Dombey, all rolled into one. And yet, whenever Jean and I got together for a little private conversation, she seemed distressed and sincerely uncomfortable.

"Jack," said my wife finally (Sylvia was safely asleep in the crib), "I am afraid, if I keep on being good any longer, I can't stop. I'm afraid I've got the habit. I'm drugged with my own patience and docility. I'm not only sick of being sweet — I'm scared for fear I can't stop. I've got to break it, somehow. Come here and let me pinch you."

"Jean," I said, "the baby said 'Ouch!'"

It was then that I noticed a strange look pass over the face of my wife. She did not laugh at the whimsical flavor of my jest; she simply turned a startled look in Sylvia's direction, and continued rapidly:

"I want to begin to be hateful again. I want to talk about my neighbors. I want to talk scandal. Oh, Jack!"— her face lighted up with sudden inspiration — "now is the time to tell me about the Crandalls' divorce. I didn't like to know the details before Sylvia was born."

I lighted a cigarette and with considerable relish moved nearer to the couch on which my wife was reclining, prepared to begin my story. I had been wanting for a long time to tell Jean about the Crandalls. The story was very interesting. Jean is one of the few women I have ever known who can appreciate a rather brutal story without getting the emphasis wrong. Her sense of humor is almost Balzacian — not, I believe, in spite of her pureness and delicacy, but because of them. She *knows*, that's all. That's one of the reasons why she is my wife. I was sure, therefore, that she could appreciate the rather biting flavor of the story I had to tell.

"Well, you know," I began, waving the smoke away from the expectant face before me, "Crandall is the devil, but that wife of his——"

There was a sound of choking from the crib.

"Hand me that baby," said Jean in a curious voice, "and go on with your story!"

I did as she requested, and noticed, with some surprise, that she pressed the convulsed face of the infant to her breast.

"Go on," she insisted strangely.

"Mrs. Crandall's disregard of the ordinary——

"Jean, your baby is choking to death! Let me get some hot water, or swing her by the toes——"

"No," said my wife sternly, "nothing. Go on with your story."

I made an effort to continue, but the struggles of our Sylvia, apparently gasping her life away in her mother's arms, were too much for me. I paused again.

"If you don't finish that story now," said Jean, and I saw her brow was moist with the effort of her speech, "you may never be able to tell me another. We've got to get the better of her before it is too late."

I don't know exactly what happened to me then. I suppose the significance, dim and tremendous, of all that Jean's speech connoted, was having its subconscious effect, but I do not remember any particular emotion at the time. I had been trying to tell my wife a story, a story in which we were both intensely interested, and I had been many times interrupted by my offspring, who seemed uncommonly unwell. I was not conscious of resenting the fact, any more than I resent the myriad kindred facts of my existence, or even of recognizing the look of mingled determination and desperation on my wife's face; but what I said, suddenly and without premeditation, was:

"Give that damned baby to me!" and I held out my hands mechanically.

As instantly as if she had been stabbed through the heart by an invisible sword, the child in my wife's arms stiffened and grew still. I saw the pallor spread itself over the little brow, and the wee, downy head fall back, lifeless and inert, while the baby fingers relaxed their convulsive clutch and spread themselves stiffly beside the little body. But the eyes remained fixed on my face, as if staring at some vision of horror too terrible to sustain.

Jean's remarkable utterance rings in my ears yet:

"Oh, my God, Jack — oh, my God, we have killed her!"

She chafed the little hands, and wrung her own in anguish, moaning and weeping.

Suddenly she turned to me.

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"'GO ON WITH YOUR STORY!'"

"Kneel down," she said; "kneel down in front of your baby and talk to her. You can save her. Pray to her! She understands what you say. Swear to her that you will never curse again. Tell her that all shall be peace and harmony in our home. Tell her that we will live up to the influence. Swear it to her, Jack, or she will die, and we shall be her murderers. Oh, my little baby!"

I sank to my knees and began mechanically quoting my wife's words, Jean prompting me, with her anguished eyes on the baby's still face.

"I swear," I was saying, "that we will never talk about the Crandalls again," when I saw a flutter of the little eyelids. No man who has not seen the damp of death on the brow of his first-born can understand the depth of my emotion at that moment.

"We will live up to the influence," prompted Jean.

"We will live up to the influence ——"

"And think only noble and harmonious thoughts ——"

"And think only ——"

It was not a simple pledge that I was in the act of making. As I finished, the tense muscles of my offspring relaxed, a quiver ran over the little body, and in a moment more she lay breathing regularly but weakly in her mother's arms.

Later, in my arms, her mother told me all about it.

"It was the influence," she sobbed. "We overdid it. I've suspected it for a long time — ever since I began to tell you I was tired of being good. She never cried at all until we mentioned a bird and a bottle. She never even whimpers unless somebody says something — worldly. Whenever you come into the room, I have to watch her so carefully. When you light a cigarette, she turns pale; and when you mention having a thirst, she chokes. It was the 'damn' that nearly destroyed her. Oh, Jack, what shall we do? Our baby is a prig — an automatic, self-acting prig. What will she be when she grows up? How can we live with her all our lives?"

It was a strange situation that my wife and I were suddenly called upon to face. Through a combination of what had seemed to us most fortuitous circumstances, we had been able to bring into the world an infant whose congenital conditions were technically perfect.

Sometimes an ironmonger, by miraculous accident, casts a bell without a flaw, and its tone is of an unearthly, almost intolerable sweetness. So with our Sylvia. We had, in our ignorance, disobeyed that law which decrees that man shall not create a perfect thing. We had brought into being a child without human frailty or weakness, who suffered from a hint of

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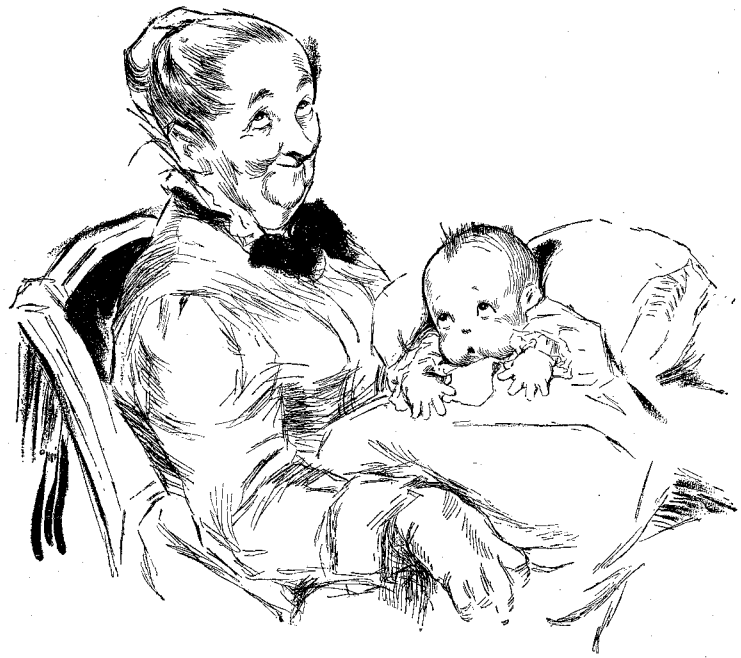

"'NOBODY EVER SPOKE AN UNKIND WORD TO THE LITTLE LAM'!'"

evil as the ordinary infant writhes at a pin-prick. Now that we realized these conditions, we were facing the alternatives of reforming our entire method of existence or shocking our Sylvia into an early grave.

We decided to get a competent trained attendant for the baby, and see as little of her as possible until we could adjust ourselves to the new relation. I suggested that we go away to some quiet place together, leaving the baby to her own devices and the mercy of a staff of imported sisters from the Mother Church, while we entered into a season of meditation and prayer. But Jean would not hear of leaving her child.

"Do you think it will be all right," I asked anxiously, "if I break off gradually? — if I get it down to a cocktail a week, say, and swear only at the club? Do you think she would notice, if I never came home with a breath?"

But my wife gave me no encouragement.

"She's so sensitive!" she cried.

We had little sleep that night, and the next day, such was the condition of Jean's nerves, and the resulting physical reaction, that she could not provide our daughter with her usual sustenance.

Our family physician was hastily summoned, and experiments were made with different kinds of artificial foods, which Sylvia accepted with her usual composure, and rejected immediately afterward, with bewildering regularity. We were in absolute despair, when our good doctor made the suggestion that we try a foster-mother.

"I know the very woman for you," he said, "and I will send her round this afternoon. Don't feel so badly, little mother," he added, with a paternal hand on Jean's head. "She is a very superior woman, and you will all be better for having her in the house."

The face of my offspring, who was lying in the maternal arms at the moment, broadened into a smile.

Of all the objectionable persons it has ever been my lot to meet in a world fairly well peopled with objectionable individuals, Mrs. Parker seemed to me to outclass them all. She was none of your subtle, insidiously virtuous women. She was blatantly, aggressively virtuous. She was a caricature of all New England righteousness and forbearance.

Her front teeth were plain but prominent. She spoke with little pious rushes of words, over which she smacked her lips as if they were edible. And she wore her pongee-colored hair strained back so tightly that she could scarcely wink. She spoke of her two ungainly children as her "little flock."

"Just Sylvia's class," I said, when I saw her; and for the first day or two it seemed as if we had found the solution of our problem. My infant daughter cottoned to her as if she were the sister of her soul, and at each fresh utterance of a pious platitude the smile on Sylvia's face grew blander.

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"That baby will *bust*, Jean," I said one day, as I watched Sylvia expand to Mrs. Parker's rendering of

> "Life is real, and life is earnest,
> And the grave is not its gold."

"I had hoped," Jean replied, with the wistful look that was becoming her habitual expression, "that there might be some way of breaking it. But now that Mrs. Parker is here, I am afraid it will never be any different — only worse, all the time."

And, indeed, the spiritual condition of our daughter did not seem to be in the least modified as time went on. Sylvia seemed perfectly satisfied with things as they were. She would lie for hours, feasting her small eyes on Mrs. Parker's unfortunately located features with an expression of the utmost beatitude on her own tiny face.

"Just the best baby in the world, ain't you, dearie?" Mrs. Parker would say to her. "Goin' to grow up to be a credit to your pretty mar and your sweet parpar. Nobody ever spoke an unkind word to the little lam'. Nobody ever shall. Did-she-was?"

Sylvia swallowed it all (I speak in metaphors) and came back for more.

Jean and I grew more despondent. We did not dare to ask each other how it would end. In fact, we could only imagine our ordeal going on unendurably until the end of time.

But a shift of conditions was even then in the air, and the change came just when we had ceased to anticipate it or deem it possible. After all, Sylvia was the daughter of Jean and me, and the blood that flowed through her veins was the same blood that had boiled furiously, for generations, at the cant and hypocrisy of the whole race of Pharisees. We did not know it, but Mrs. Parker, in homeopathic doses, was the best possible remedy for our daughter's affliction. We had unwittingly fed Sylvia with a hair of the tail of the dog that bit her, and the cure was working within her.

"Father dear," said Jean one morning, as I was slitting myself with my razor before her dressing-table mirror. It was the worst light in the world, but so nearly had our affliction drawn us together that I spent every available moment in Jean's vicinity.

"Don't let this encourage you too much, but the baby seems different to me these last few days. Yesterday she almost made a face at Parker when she began that about nobody ever speaking an unkind word."

I made an incision with the razor.

"Don't flatter yourself," I said. "She had a vision of an angel scratching its wing, or dusting its halo, or somethin' like that. She's nuts on Parker. She——"

I was interrupted by a sudden commotion in the nursery. The voice of Mrs. Parker, raised loud and insistent:

"Such a good baby, with such a pretty mar and a sweet parpar! Take the nice milk out of the lovely bottle. Take the nice milk from the kind Mrs. Parker."

Jean opened the nursery door, which led from her own room, and looked in.

"Come here a minute," she said softly, and beckoned me to her side.

Mrs. Parker was in the act of inducing Sylvia to take a little artificial food. She held the baby awkwardly on her left arm, and I reached the door just in time to see the storm that had been gathering in the face of Sylvia break into tears.

"THE STORM THAT HAD BEEN GATHERING BROKE INTO TEARS"

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"Take the nice milk —" Mrs. Parker was beginning, when, with a yell of rage, my daughter Sylvia knocked the bottle from her nurse's hand and sent it crashing to the floor.

Mrs. Parker painstakingly, and with some creaking of the joints, bent to pick it up.

She was a curiously unlovely spectacle, her face red from the exertion, her angles protruding with the same graceless insistence as her front teeth. This was the specimen of humanity that our Sylvia preferred to her doting parents.

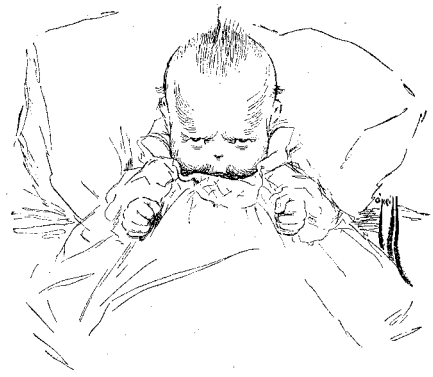
"Take the nice milk from the kind —" she patiently reiterated, and she laid the infant again on her knees. "Nobody ever spoke ——"

She attempted again to press the rubber mouth-piece between Sylvia's rosebud lips.

The baby lay very still now. Her fusillade of kicks was over. The storm of weeping that had preceded it had passed. She lay unnaturally quiet in her nurse's arms, until Mrs. Parker made a last attempt to force the nipple upon her.

Then she opened her eyes wide on her nurse's face, with a look of the most serene and malignant exasperation I have ever seen on a human countenance.

"Da-da-da-da-damn!" said my daughter Sylvia.



VINTAGE

BY

WITTER BYNNER

THE vintage-feast in Vevey came
Ten years ago this day,
Led by a boy with cheek aflame,
Bacchus in garb, Bacchus in name,
A lad whose body was his fame
When the vintage-feast in Vevey came
Ten years ago to-day.

Marble of limb, but with melting eye,
Human and warm and young,
He passed the village maidens by,
Who could not help themselves but spy,
Some openly, some secretly,
His laughing lip, his half-clad thigh
That moved so free and young!

In Vevey comes the vintage-feast;
And Bacchus comes to-day,
A newer youth with the flush of the east
At his temples, and a vine-hung breast,
Dogged by a riotous, lurching beast —
Bacchus of that other feast,
Silenus of to-day!

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RECOLLECTIONS OF THE SHAH OF PERSIA

BY

XAVIER PAOLI

Special Commissioner of the Sûreté Générale, Detailed to Accompany Royal Visitors to France

AUTHOR OF "RECOLLECTIONS OF THE KINGS AND QUEENS OF EUROPE"

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

MUST I confess it? When I was told, a few weeks before the opening of the International Exhibition of 1900, that I should have the honor of being attached to the person of Muzaffr-ed-Din, King of Kings and Shah of Persia, during the official visit that he contemplated paying to Paris, I did not welcome the news with the alacrity that it ought doubtless to have evoked.

And yet, I had no reason for any prejudice against this monarch: I did not even know him. My apprehensions were grounded on more remote causes: I recalled the memories that a former Shah, his predecessor, had left among us. Nasr-ed-Din was a strange and capricious sovereign, who had never succeeded in making up his mind, when he came to Europe, to leave on the farther shore, so to speak, the manners and customs of his country or to lay aside the troublesome fancies in which his reckless despotism loved to indulge. Was it not related of him that, while staying in the country, in France, he caused a sheep or two to be sacrificed every morning in his bedroom, in order to insure the Prophet's clemency until the evening? And that he had the amiable habit of buying anything that took his fancy, but of neglecting to pay the bill?

Lastly, this very delicious story was told about him. The Shah had asked whether he could not, by way of amusement, be present at an execution of capital punishment during one of his stays in Paris. It so happened that the occasion offered. He was invited to go, one morning, to the Place de la Roquette, where the scaffold had been erected. He arrived, with his diamonds and his suite; but, the moment he saw the condemned man, his generous heart was filled with a sudden tenderness for the murderer.

"Not that one — the other!" he ordered, pointing to the public prosecutor, who was presiding over the ceremony.

Picture the magistrate's face while the Shah insisted, and thought it discourteous of them not to yield at once to his wishes!

I therefore asked myself with a certain dismay what unpleasant surprises his successor might have in store for me. I pictured him coming from the depths of a very old and mysterious race of humanity, traveling from his capital to the shores of Europe slowly, by easy stages, as in the medieval times, across deserts and mountains and blue-domed dead cities, escorted by a fabulous baggage-train of rare stuffs, of praying-carpets, of marvelous jewels, an army of turbaned horsemen, a swarm of officials, a harem of dancing-girls, and a long file of camels.

I asked myself if I, too, would be obliged to assist at sacrifices of heifers, and to console unpaid tradesmen, or to be pointed out by His Majesty as a "substitute" under the knife of the guillotine.

However, I was needlessly alarmed. In Persia, thank goodness, the Shahs succeed but do not resemble one another. I became fully aware of this when I was admitted to intimacy with our new guest. Muzaffr-ed-Din had nothing in common with his father. He was an overgrown child, whose massive stature, great, bushy mustache, very kind round eyes,

Translated by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos.

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prominent stomach, and general adiposity formed a contrast to his backward mental condition and his sleepy intelligence. He had, in fact, the brain of a twelve-year-old schoolboy, together with a schoolboy's easy astonishment, candor, and curiosity. He busied himself exclusively with small things, the only things that excited and interested him. He was gentle, good-natured, an arrant coward, generous at times, and extremely capricious; but his whims never went so far as to give him pleasure in the suffering of others. He loved life — was enormously attached to it, in fact; and he liked me, too, with a real affection, which was spontaneous and, at times, touching.

"Paoli, worthy Paoli," he said to me one day, in an expansive mood, fixing his round pupils upon me, "you — my good, my dear domestic!"

When I appeared surprised, and even a little offended, at the place that he was allotting me in the social scale —

"His Majesty means to say," explained the grand vizir, "that he looks upon you as belonging to the family. 'Domestic,' in his mind, means a friend of the house, according to the true etymology of the word, which is derived from the Latin *domus*."

The intention was pretty enough; I asked no more, remembering that Muzaffr-ed-Din spoke French with difficulty and employed a sort of negro chatter to express his thoughts.

II

At the time of his first stay in Paris, the Shah had the privilege of inaugurating the famous Sovereigns' Palace, which the Government had fitted up in the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne for the entertainment of its royal visitors. The house was a comparatively small one, but it was sumptuously decorated. The national furniture repository had sent some of the finest pieces to be found in its historic store-rooms. In fact, I believe that the Shah slept in the bed of Napoleon I. and washed his hands and face in the Empress Marie Louise's basin — things that interested him but little. Great traditions were a matter of indifference to him; he infinitely preferred futile realities in the form of useless objects whose glitter pleased his eye, and of more or less harmonious sounds whose vibrations tickled his ears.

His tastes were proved on the day of his arrival by two quick decisions: he ordered to be packed up for Teheran the grand piano that adorned his drawing-room and the motor-car that awaited his good pleasure outside, after hearing the one, trying the other, and lavishly paying for both. He would not be denied.

His amazement was great when he visited the Exhibition for the first time. The wonderful cosmopolitan city that seemed to have leaped into existence in the space of one of the thousand and one nights of the Persian legend stirred his Eastern imagination, strive though he might to conceal the fact. The splendor of the exotic display exercised an irresistible attraction for him. The glass cases of jewelry also fascinated his gaze, although he himself, doubtless without realizing it, was a perambulating shop-window that any jeweler might have longed to possess. On his long Persian tunic, with its red edges and ample skirts, creased with folds, he wore a remarkable display of precious stones, and one did not know which to admire most — the gleaming sapphires that adorned his shoulder-straps, the splendid emeralds, the exquisite turquoises that studded the baldric and the gold scabbard of his sword, the four enormous rubies that took the place of the buttons of his uniform, or the dazzling and formidable diamond, the famous Daria-Nour, the "Sea of Light," fastened to his *khola*, the traditional headdress, whence jutted, like a fountain of light, a quivering aigrette in brilliants. Thus decked out, Muzaffr-ed-Din was worth thirty-four million francs net; and even then he was far from carrying the whole of his fortune upon his person.

In his solemn walks through the various sections of the Exhibition, where my modest frock-coat looked drab and out of place among the glittering uniforms, he was attended by the grand vizir, the only dignitary entitled, by the etiquette of the Persian court, to carry a cane in the presence of his sovereign, who himself always leaned upon a stick made of some precious wood. He bought everything indifferently — musical instruments, old tapestries, a set of table-cutlery, a panorama, a "new-art" ring, a case of pistols. He looked, touched, weighed the thing in his hand, and then, raising his forefinger, said, "*Je prends*," while the delighted exhibitor, greatly touched and impressed, took down the order and the address.

Nevertheless, Muzaffr-ed-Din was not as rich as one would be inclined to think. Each time he came to Europe, where he spent fabulous sums, he procured the money needed for his journey, not only by raising a loan, generally in Russia, but also by another method, which was both ingenious and businesslike. Before leaving his possessions, he summoned his chief officers of State — ministers, provincial governors, and the like — and proposed

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the following bargain to them: Those who wished to form part of his suite must first pay him a sum of money, which he fixed in accordance with the importance of their functions; it varied between 50,000 and 300,000 francs. In return, he authorized them to recoup themselves for this advance in any way they pleased. Here we find the explanation of the large number of persons who accompanied the Shah on his travels, and the quaint and unexpected titles that they bore, such as that of "Minister of the Dock-yard" (though Persia has never owned a navy), and one still more extraordinary, that of "Attorney to the Heir Apparent." Although they sometimes had romantic souls, they invariably had terribly practical minds. Eager to recover their outlay as quickly as possible, they practised on a huge scale and without scruple or hesitation what I may describe as the bonus or commission system. This explained how, on each of his trips to France, the Shah was able to spend from eight to twelve million francs in pocket-money.

As soon as the people about him knew what shops His Majesty proposed to visit in the course of his daily drive, a bevy of courtiers would swoop down upon the awe-struck tradesman and imperiously insist upon his promising them a big commission, in exchange for which they undertook to prevail upon His Majesty graciously to honor the establishment with his custom. The shopkeeper, as a rule, raised no objection — he was quite content to increase the price in proportion; and when the good Shah presented himself in the shop a few hours later, his suite praised the goods of the house so heartily that he never failed to let fall the traditional phrase, "*Je prends.*" Nor did any of those who surrounded him dream of making a secret of the traffic in which they indulged behind their sovereign's back: it was a right duly acquired and paid for.

I am bound to say, however, that the grand vizir — no doubt because he was already too well off — appeared to be above these sordid and venial considerations. This important personage, whose name on that occasion was His Highness the Sadrazani Mirza Ali Asghar Khan Emin es Sultan, combined an acute understanding with a superior cast of mind. The Shah showed him a very noteworthy affection and treated him as a friend. These marks of special kindness were due to a curious cause, which an amiable Persian was good enough to reveal to me.

It appears that when the late Shah, Nasr-ed-Din, was shot dead at the mosque where he was making a pilgrimage, the grand vizir of the time, who was none other than this same Mirza Ali Asghar Khan, pretended that the Shah's wound was not serious, had the corpse seated in the carriage, and drove back to the palace beside it, acting as if he were talking to his sovereign, fanning him, and asking occasionally for water to quench his thirst, as if he were still alive.

The death was not acknowledged till some days later. In this way, the vizir gave the heir apparent, the present Shah, time to return from Tauris, and averted the grave troubles that would certainly have arisen had the truth been known. Muzaffr-ed-Din owed his crown, and perhaps his life, to his grand vizir; small wonder that he showed him some gratitude.

His court minister, Mohamed Khan, could also have laid claim to gratitude, for he gave proof of remarkable presence of mind at the time of the attempted assassination of Muzaffr-ed-Din during his stay in Paris in 1900.

The incident is perhaps still in the reader's recollection. The Shah, with the court minister by his side, and General Parent, the chief French officer attached to his person, seated facing him, had just left the Sovereigns' Palace to drive to the Exhibition, when a man sprang on the step of the open landau, produced a revolver, and took aim at the monarch's chest. Before he had time, however, to pull the trigger, a hand of iron fell upon his wrist and clutched it with such force that the man was compelled to let go his revolver, which fell at the feet of the sovereign, while the would-be murderer was arrested by the police. Mohamed Khan, by this opportune and energetic interference, had prevented a shot the consequences of which would have been disastrous for the Shah and very annoying for the French Government, all the more so as the author of the attempt was a French subject, a sort of fanatic from the south, whose action had been suggested by the recent assassination of King Humbert of Italy.

Here is a curious detail: I had received that very morning an anonymous letter, dated from Naples, but posted in Paris, in which the sovereign was warned that an attempt would be made on his life. Although this kind of communication was frequent, I had ordered the supervision to be redoubled inside the palace; as a matter of fact, I did not much fear a surprise outside, for the Shah's carriage was always surrounded by a detachment of cavalry when he drove out. But, as ill luck would have it, he took it into his head to go out that day before the time he himself had fixed, and without waiting for the arrival of the escort. I have shown the result.

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During the whole of this scene, which lasted only a few seconds, he did not utter a single word; the pallor that overspread his cheeks alone betrayed the emotion that he felt. He ordered the coachman to drive on; but when, at last, they reached the Champs Élysées, and he perceived numerous groups waiting to cheer him, he emerged from his stupor.

"Is it going to begin again?" he cried in terror.

III

He was given, in fact, to frequent and strange fits of alarm. He always carried a loaded pistol in his trousers pocket, though he never used it. On one of his journeys in France, he even took it into his head to make a high court official walk before him, when he left the theater, carrying a revolver pointed at the peaceable sight-seers who had gathered to see him come out. As soon as I saw this, I ran up to the threatening body-guard.

"Put that revolver away," I said. "It's not the custom here."

But I had to insist pretty roughly before he consented to lay aside his weapon.

The Shah, for that matter, was no less distrustful of his own subjects. I observed that, when the Persians were in his presence, they adopted a uniform attitude which consisted in holding their hands crossed on their stomach, no doubt as evidence of their harmless intentions. It was a guaranty — of a very casual sort, we must admit.

For the rest, his "alarms" displayed themselves under the most diverse aspects and in the most unexpected circumstances. For instance, there was no persuading him to ascend the Eiffel Tower. The disappointment of his guides was increased by the fact that he would come as far as the foot of the pillars; they always thought that he meant to go up. But no; once below the immense iron framework, he gazed up in the air, examined the lifts, flung a timid glance at the staircases, then suddenly turned on his heels and walked away. They told him in vain that his august father had gone up as far as the first floor; nothing would induce him to do as much.

I remember a day — it was at the time of his second stay in Paris — when, on entering his drawing-room, I found him wearing a very care-worn expression.

"Paoli," he said, taking my hand and leading me to the window, "look!"

Look as I might, I saw nothing out of the way. Down below, three bricklayers stood on the pavement, talking quietly together.

"What!" said the Shah. "Don't you see those men standing still down there? They have been there for an hour, talking and watching my window. Paoli, they want to kill me."

Repressing a terrible wish to laugh, I resolved to reassure our guest with a lie.

"Why, I know them!" I replied. "I know their names: they are decent workingmen."

Muzaffr-ed-Din's face lighted up at once.

"You seem to know everybody," he said, giving me a grateful look.

The most amusing incident was that which happened on the occasion of an experiment with radium. I had described to the sovereign, in the course of conversation, the wonderful discovery which our great savant, M. Curie, had just made. The Shah was extremely interested in my story, and repeatedly expressed a desire to be shown the precious magic stone. Professor Curie was accordingly informed, and, in spite of his stress of work, agreed to come to the Élysée Palace Hotel and give an exhibition. As complete darkness was needed for radium to be shown in all its brilliancy, I had with endless trouble persuaded the King of Kings to come down to one of the hotel cellars arranged for the purpose. At the appointed time, His Majesty and all his suite proceeded to the underground apartment in question. Professor Curie closed the door, switched off the electric light, and uncovered his specimen of radium, when suddenly a shout of terror, resembling at once the roar of a bull and the yell of a man who is being murdered, rang out, followed by hundreds of similar cries. Amid general excitement and consternation, we flung ourselves upon the electric switches, turned on the lights, and beheld a strange sight: In the midst of the prostrate Persians stood the Shah, his arms clinging to the neck of his howling grand vizir, his round pupils dilated to their rims, while he shouted at the top of his voice, in Persian:

"Come away! Come away!"

The switching on of the light calmed this mad anguish as if by magic. Realizing the disappointment that he had caused M. Curie, he tried to offer him a decoration by way of compensation; but the austere man of science thought right to decline it.

The instinctive dread of darkness and solitude was so keen in the Persian monarch that he required his bedroom to be filled, during the night, with light and sound. Accordingly, every evening, as soon as he had lain down and closed his eyes, the members of his suite gathered round his bed, lighted all the candelabra, and exchanged their impressions

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aloud; while young nobles of the court, relieving one another in pairs, conscientiously patted his arms and legs with light, sharp, regular little taps. The King of Kings imagined that he was in this way keeping death at a distance, if perchance it should take a fancy to visit him in his sleep; and the extraordinary thing is that he did sleep, notwithstanding all this massage, light, and noise.

IV

The need that he felt of having people constantly around him, and of reproducing the atmosphere of his distant country wherever he fixed his temporary residence, was reflected in the picturesque and singularly animated aspect that the hotel or palace at which he elected to stay assumed soon after his installation. It was promptly transformed into a vast exotic caravansary, presenting the appearance of a French fair combined with that of an Eastern bazaar. The house was taken possession of by its new occupants, from the kitchens, ruled over by the Persian master cook who prepared the monarch's dishes, to the attics, where the inferior servants were accommodated. One saw nothing but figures in dark tunics and astrakhan caps, squatting in the passages, leaning over the staircases. Along the corridors and in the halls, the shopkeepers had improvised stalls as at Teheran, in the hope that the monarch would let fall from his august lips, in passing, the *"Je prends"* that promised wealth. In the uncouth crowd which the desire of provoking and hearing that blessed phrase attracted to the waiting-rooms of the hotel, all the professions rubbed shoulders promiscuously: curiosity-dealers, unsuccessful inventors, collectors of autographs and postage-stamps, ruined financiers, charlatans, unknown artists, women of doubtful character.

Their numbers had increased so greatly, on the faith of the legend that the Shah's treasures were inexhaustible, that a radical step had to be taken: when Muzaffr-ed-Din returned to Paris in 1902 and 1905, the applicants for favors were forbidden to resume their little manoeuver. Thereupon they changed their tactics: they sat down and wrote.

I have kept these letters, which the Shah never read, and which his secretary handed me regularly, without having read them either. They arrived by each post in shoals. One could easily make a volume of them that would provide psychologists with a very curious study of the human soul and mind. Among those poor letters are many obscure, touching, comic, candid, and cynical specimens; some are absurd, others imprudent or sad. Most of them are signed; and among the signatures of these requests for assistance are names that one is surprised to find there. I must be permitted to suppress these names and to limit myself to reproducing the most typical of the letters that fell under my eyes.

First, a few specimens of the "comic note."

SIRE: The feeling that prompts me to write to you, O noble King, is the love which I feel for your country. I will come straight to the point: I will ask you, O Majesty, if I, a plain French subject, may have a post of some kind in your ideal kingdom.

Dentist I am; a dentist I would remain, in your Majesty's service. All my life long, you would be assured of my complete devotion.

A future Persian dentist to his future King.

P. J. L.

Pray, Sire, address the reply to the *poste restante* at Post-office No. 54.

ON MY WAY HOME,
27 August, 1902.

YOUR MAJESTY: Yesterday, Tuesday, I was in Paris, waiting to have the pleasure of seeing you leave your hotel. That pleasure was not vouchsafed me.

But, on the other hand, a ring set with a diamond, which I was taking to be repaired, was stolen from me by a pickpocket.

This ring was the only diamond which my wife possessed. In consequence of the theft, she now possesses none.

I put to myself the question whether I could not indict you before a French court, as being the direct cause of the theft.

I find nothing in our French law-books likely to decide in my favor.

And so I prefer to come and beseech you to redress the involuntary injury which you have done me.

A choice stone, which I could have set as a ring, would make good all the damage that I have suffered.

I am well aware that you must have numerous and various requests for assistance. This is not one of them.

But I should be infinitely grateful to you if you would understand that, but for your coming to Paris, I should not have been robbed, and if you would kindly send me a choice stone to replace the one stolen from me.

Will your Majesty pray receive the homage of my most profound respect.

G. P.
Attorney-at-law,
Barbezieux (Gironde), France.

Now comes a touching note:

A little provincial work-girl, who has not the honor of being known to His Majesty, kneels down before him and, with her hands folded together, entreats him to make her a present of a sum of 1,200 francs, which would enable her to marry the young man she loves. . . . Oh, what blessings he would receive day by day for that kind action!

I beg the Shah to forgive me for the offenses of this letter against etiquette, with which I am not acquainted. I kiss His Majesty's hands, and I am

His most humble and obedient little servant,

A. C.

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Is not the following letter an exquisitely candid specimen of the proper art of "sponging"?

YOUR MAJESTY: As you are a friend of France, I propose to write to you as a friend; you will permit me to do so, I hope.

The question is this: I have the greatest longing to set eyes on the sea; my husband has a few days' holiday in the course of October; I should like to make the most of it and to go away for a little while.

Our means are very small indeed; my husband has only 105 francs a month; and I could not do what I wish without encroaching on my housekeeping money, which is calculated down to the last centime.

I therefore remembered your generosity, and thought that you might be touched by my request.

You would not like a little Paris woman to be prevented from enjoying the sight of the sea which you have doubtless often admired.

You are very fond of traveling; you will understand my curiosity.

Will your Majesty deign to accept the expression of my most respectful and distinguished sentiments?

Mme. A. A.

The following original proposal came from a well-known business house:

SIR: After the Monza crime and the attempt of which you were the object yesterday, and in view of the solemnities during which you might be too much exposed to danger, I consider it my duty to bring to your notice certain particulars which might be of the greatest use to you and those about your person.

I refer to secret waistcoats of my own manufacture which I am able to offer to you, and which are absolutely warranted.

The waistcoat which I am offering is proof against a revolver-bullet and, of course, against a sword or dagger.

As an absolute guaranty, I can assure you as follows by experiment: the fabric consists of a very close and solidly riveted coat of steel mail; the shape of the links has been specially studied so as to allow of great suppleness, while preserving the greatest solidity.

It resists the 12-mm. bullet of the regulation revolver, 1874 pattern.

I have specimens at which bullets were fired at a distance of four yards; they give an exact idea of the resisting power.

The coat of mail is lined with silk or satin, which gives the appearance of an ordinary garment and does not for a moment suggest its special object.

The waistcoat covers and protects the back, the chest, the stomach, and is continued down the abdomen.

I must add that the waistcoat is very easy to wear, and in no way inconvenient, on condition that I am supplied with the necessary measurements or, better still, with an ordinary day waistcoat of the wearer's, fitted to his size.

Hoping in the circumstances to be of some use to you, I beg your Majesty to accept the expression of my most profound respect.

R. G.

Let us pass to the children. Less unreasonable than their parents, they content themselves with asking for postage stamps, bicycles, or autographs.

YOUR MAJESTY: I begin by begging your pardon for my presumption; but I have heard everybody say, and I read in the paper, that your Majesty is greatly interested in motor-cars. I therefore thought that you must also have ridden the bicycle, which you now, no doubt, care less for; and it occurred to me that, if you happened to have an old one put by, your Majesty might do me the honor to give it to me.

Papa and my big brother Jean go out riding on their bicycles, and I am left at home with mama, because I have not a machine and they cannot afford to buy me one.

I should be so proud to have a bicycle given me by your Majesty.

I shall not tell papa that I am writing to your Majesty, because he would laugh at me, and I shall take three sous from my purse for the stamp on this letter.

I pray God not to let those wicked anarchists attack your Majesty, to whom I offer my profound respect.

MAURICE LELANDAIS,
aged 9½ years.

Another schoolboy:

VERVIERS, 3 September.

GREAT KING OF PERSIA IN FRANCE — SIR:

I have read in the paper that you are very rich and have lots of gold.

My father promised to give me a gold watch for my first communion next year, if I worked hard at school.

I did study, Sir, for I was second and the first is thirteen years old and I am only eleven and a half. To prove it to you, here is my prize-list. Now, when I ask if I shall have my watch, my father answers that he has no money and he wants it all for bread. It is not right, Sir, to deceive me like that. But I hope that you will give me what they refuse. Do me that great pleasure. I will pray for you.

I love you very much.

M. J.

Here is an artless request from a little English girl:

YOUR MAJESTY: I hear that you are taking a holiday in Paris, and I think that this must be the best time to write to you, for you will not be so busy as in your own kingdom.

First of all, I want to tell you that I am an English girl, fourteen years of age, and my name is Mary. I love collecting autographs, and so far I have been very lucky and have got some of celebrities, but I have none of a King, except Menelik, who is a black majesty.

Now, I should ever so much like to have a few lines in your handwriting.

Do be so very kind as to write to me.

MARY ST. J.

To conclude with, here are a few lively letters from ladies, dark and fair:

PARIS, 27 July.

SIR: I won the last beauty prize at Marienbad, and I am simply dying to make your acquaintance.

In this hope, I have the honor to greet you.

FERNANDE DE B.

MARSEILLES, 1 August.

SIRE: It is a pleasure to me to write to you. From my childhood's days, I have admired Persia, that beautiful country, so dear to my heart. Since I have heard you mentioned, I love you, Sire; I should like to be at your service. I do not know the Per-

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A PHOTOGRAPH GIVEN BY THE SHAH OF PERSIA TO M. PAOLI, SHOWING THE SHAH SEATED BETWEEN HIS TWO GRANDSONS AND SURROUNDED BY HIS SUITE; M. PAOLI STANDS AT THE EXTREME RIGHT

THE GRAND VIZIR OF PERSIA, WHO SAVED THE THRONE OF THE SHAH

sian anguage, but, if you adopt me, I shall know it in a few days and you shall be my master.

Receive, Sire, my sincere greetings.

MIREILLE ——.

P. S. Please reply. I will start for Paris at once.

To HIS MAJESTY MUZAFFR-ED-DIN.

We should be greatly honored if you would do us the honor to come and spend a few days in the principality of Monaco.

A group of ladies:

BLANCHE.
JEANNE.
ADÈLE.

V

All these efforts of the imagination, all these prodigies of ingenuity, all these amorous suggestions, were wasted. As I have said, the Shah took no notice whatever of the six hundred and odd begging letters of different kinds addressed to him during his visits to France. Pleasure-loving and capricious, careful of his own peace of mind, he dreaded and avoided emotions. Nevertheless, he was not insensible to pity nor indifferent to the charms of the fair sex. At times he was capable of sudden move-

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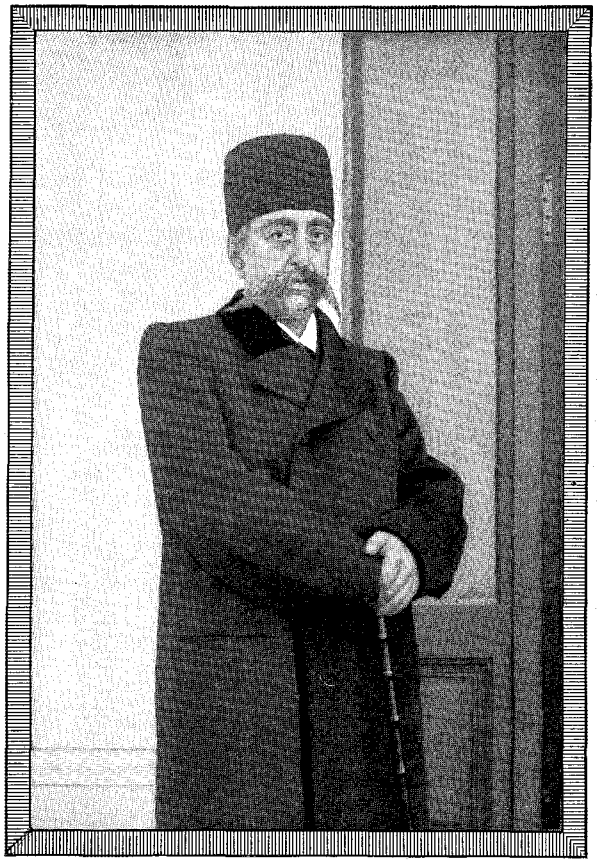

MUZAFFR-ED-DIN, THE FORMER SHAH OF PERSIA, FOR WHOSE PERSONAL SAFETY DURING HIS VISIT TO FRANCE M. PAOLI WAS RESPONSIBLE

ments of magnificent generosity: he would readily give a diamond to some humble workwoman whom he met on his way; he would of his own accord hand a bank-note to a beggar; he freely distributed Persian gold pieces stamped with his effigy.

He would also fall a victim to sudden erotic fancies that sometimes caused me moments of cruel embarrassment. I remember that, one afternoon, when we were driving in the Bois de Boulogne, near the lakes, Muzaffr-ed-Din saw a view that he liked, ordered the carriages to stop, and expressed a desire himself to take some snap-shots of the charming spot. We at once alighted. A little farther on, a group of smart ladies sat chatting gaily, without taking the smallest heed of our presence. The Shah, seeing them, asked me to beg them to come closer, so that he might photograph them. Although I did not know them, I approached and spoke to them, and, with every excuse, explained the sovereign's whim to them. Greatly amused, they yielded to it with a good grace. The Shah took the photograph, smiled at the ladies, and, when the operation was over, called me to him again:

"Paoli," he said, "they are very pretty, very nice; go and ask them if they would like to come back with me to Teheran."

Imagine my face! I had to employ all the resources of my eloquence to make the King of Kings understand that you cannot take a woman to Teheran, as you would a piano, a cinematograph, or a motor-car, and that you cannot say of her, as of an article in a shop, "*Je prends.*"

I doubt whether he really grasped the force of my arguments, for some time after, when we were at the opera, in the box of the President of the Republic, we perceived with dismay that His Persian Majesty, instead of watching the performance on the stage,—which chanced to be that exquisite ballet "Coppélia," with some of our prettiest dancers taking part in it,— kept his opera-glass obstinately fixed on a member of the audience in the back row of the fourth tier, giving signs of manifest excitement as he did so. I was beginning to wonder with anxiety whether he had caught sight of some "suspicious face," when the

HUSSEIN ALI MIRZA, THE PRESENT SHAH OF PERSIA, WHO SUCCEEDED TO THE CROWN AFTER HIS FATHER WAS DETHRONED

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court minister, in whose ear he had whispered a few words, came over to me and said, with an air of embarrassment:

"His Majesty feels a profound admiration for a lady up there — do you see? The fourth seat from the right. His Majesty would be obliged to you if you would enable him to make her acquaintance. You can tell her, if you like, as an inducement, that my sovereign will invite her to go back with him to Teheran."

Again!

Although this sort of errand did not fall within the scope of my instructions, I regarded the worthy Oriental's idea as so comical that I asked one of my detectives, who, dressed to the nines, was keeping guard outside the presidential box, whether he would care to go upstairs and, if possible, convey the flattering invitation to the object of the imperial flame. My Don Juan by proxy assented, and set out on his mission.

The Shah's impatience increased from moment to moment. The last act had begun when I saw my inspector return alone, and looking very sheepish.

"Well," I asked, "what did she say?"

"She boxed my ears."

The sovereign, when the grand vizir conveyed this grievous news to him, knitted his bushy eyebrows, declared that he was tired, and ordered his carriage.

MOHAMED ALI, THE SUCCESSOR OF MUZAFFR-ED-DIN, AND FATHER OF THE PRESENT SHAH, WHO WAS DEPOSED BY HIS SUBJECTS IN A RECENT REVOLUTION

VI

The Shah's days were always full of engagements. Rising very early in the morning, he devoted long hours to his toilet, to his prayers, and to political conversations with the grand vizir. He worked as little as possible, but saw many people; he liked giving audiences to doctors and purveyors. He always ate his meals alone, in accordance with Persian etiquette, and was served sometimes with European dishes, which were better suited to his impaired digestive organs than the Persian fare served to him at other meals, consisting of slices of Ispahan melon, with white and flavorsome flesh; of the national dish called *pilaf tiobab*, in which meat cut up and mixed with delicate spices lay spread on a bed of rice just scalded, underdone, and crisp; of hard-boiled eggs and young marrows; or else of *stilo* grill, consisting of scallops of mutton soaked in aromatic vinegar and cooked over a slow fire of pine-wood embers; lastly, of aubergine fritters, of which he was very fond. I am bound to say that Persian cooking, which I had many opportunities of tasting, is delicious, and that the dishes that I have named would have done honor to any Parisian bill of fare.

After rising from table, Muzaffr-ed-Din generally devoted an hour to taking a nap, after which we went out either for a drive round the Bois or to see the shops or the Paris sights. To tell the truth, we hardly ever knew beforehand what the sovereign's plans would be. He seemed to take a mischievous delight in altering the afternoon program and route which I had worked out with his approval in the morning. Thanks to his whims, I lived in a constant state of alarm.

"I want to see some museums to-day," he

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MUZAFFR-ED-DIN AND THE PERSIAN MINISTER COMING OUT OF THE ÉLYSÉE PALACE HOTEL

would say at eleven o'clock. "We will start at two."

I would at once inform the Minister of Fine Arts, and telephone the military governor of Paris to send an escort.

At three o'clock we would still be waiting. At last, just about four, he would appear, with a look of indifference and care on his face, and tell me that he would much prefer to go for a drive in the Bois de Boulogne.

One day, after he had spent the morning in listening to a chapter of the life of Napoleon I., he beckoned to me, on his way to lunch.

"M. Paoli," he said, "I want to go to the Château de Fontainebleau to-day."

"But, Sir, you see ——"

"Quick, quick!"

There was no arguing the matter. I rushed to the telephone, warned the panic-stricken railway company that we must have a special train at all costs, and informed the keeper of the palace and the dumfounded sub-prefect of our imminent arrival at Fontainebleau.

When the Shah, still under the influence of his morning's course of reading, stepped from the carriage, two hours later, before the gate of the palace, he was seized with a strange freak. He demanded that the dragoons who had formed his escort from the station should dismount and enter the famous Cour des Adieux after him. Next, he made them fall into line in the middle of the great quadrangle, leaned against the steps, looked at them long and fondly, muttered a few sentences in Persian, and then disappeared inside the palace.

Greatly alarmed, we thought at first that he had gone mad; but at last we understood. He was enacting the scene in which the Emperor takes leave of his grenadiers. It may have been very flattering to the dragoons; I doubt if it was quite so flattering to Napoleon.

His visit to the Louvre will also linger in my memory among the amusing episodes of his visits to Paris. M. Leyques, who was at that time Minister of Fine Arts, and who in this capacity did the honors of the museum to the Shah, had resolved carefully to avoid showing our guest the Persian room, fearing lest the King of Kings, who perhaps would not realize the importance of the priceless collection which Mme. Dieulafoy and M. Morgan had brought back with them, should show a keen vexation at finding himself in the presence of jewels and mosaics that he might have

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preferred to see in his own country.

The Minister, therefore, conducted him through the picture and sculpture galleries, trying to befog his mind and tire his legs, so that he might declare his curiosity satisfied as soon as possible.

Lo and behold, however, the Shah suddenly said:

"Take me to the Persian room!"

There was no evading the command. M. Leyques, obviously worried, whispered an order to the chief attendant, and suggested to the Shah that he should take a short rest before continuing his inspection. The Shah agreed.

Meantime, in the Persian room, keepers and attendants hurriedly cleared away the more valuable ornaments and mosaics, so that Muzaffr-ed-Din should not feel any too cruel regrets; and at last the King of Kings, far from revealing any disappointment, declared himself delighted to find in Paris so well-arranged a collection of curious remains of ancient Persian architecture and art. And he added slyly:

"When I have a museum at Teheran, I shall see that we have a French room."

For that matter, he was often capable of administering a snub when we thought that we were providing him with a surprise. For instance, one day, when, with a certain self-conceit, I showed him our three camels in the Jardin d'Acclimatation —

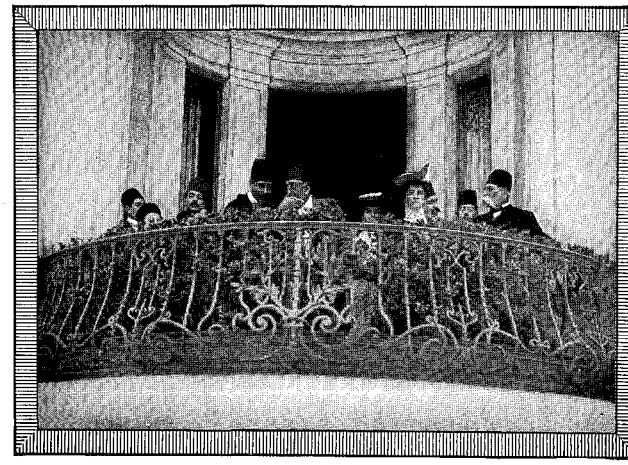
"I own nine thousand!" he announced, with a scornful smile.

Our Zoölogical Gardens did not interest him; he really enjoyed himself there only twice, to my knowledge. The first time was when, at his own request, he was allowed to witness the repugnant sight of a boa-constrictor devouring a live rabbit.

The second time that he seemed to amuse himself was on the occasion of a wedding dance that was being held in a room next to that in which he

THE SHAH AT THE PARIS EXPOSITION

THE SHAH AND HIS SUITE AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE PIGEON-SHOOTING GROUNDS



THE SHAH WATCHING A PROCESSION FROM HIS HOTEL BALCONY

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MOHAMED ALI'S RUSSIAN TEACHER, HOLDING THE CROWN PRINCE ALI MIRZA

had stopped to take tea. On hearing the music, he suddenly rose and opened the door leading to the ball-room. The appearance of the devil in person would not have produced greater confusion than that of this potentate, covered with diamonds and wearing his tall astrakhan cap. But he, without the slightest embarrassment, went the round of the couples, shook hands with the bride and bridegroom, gave them pieces of Persian gold money, and made his excuses to the bride for not having a necklace about him to offer her. I was waiting for him to invite her to accompany him to Teheran, but the husband's presence no doubt frightened him.

He seldom left his rooms at night. Sometimes he went to circus performances, or an extravaganza, or musical play. He preferred, however, to devote his evenings to more domestic enjoyments. He loved the pleasures of home life. Sometimes he played with his little sons, "the little shahs," as they were called, nice little boys of from seven to thirteen. At other times he indulged in his favorite games, chess and billiards. He played with his grand vizir, his minister of ceremonies, or myself. The stakes were generally twenty francs, sometimes a hundred. We did our best to lose, for, if we had the bad luck to win, he would show his ill temper by suddenly throwing up the game and retiring into a corner, where his servants lighted his great Persian pipe for him, the *kaljan*, a sort of Turkish narghileh, filled with a scented tobacco called *tombeki*. Often, also, to console himself for his mortification at billiards, he called for music. I then heard songs behind the closed hangings, harsh, strange, and also very sweet songs, accompanied on the piano or the violin. It was a sort of evocation of the East in a modern frame; and the contrast, I must say, was rather pleasing.

VII

The Shah and I grew accustomed to each other, little by little, and became the best of friends. He refused to go anywhere without

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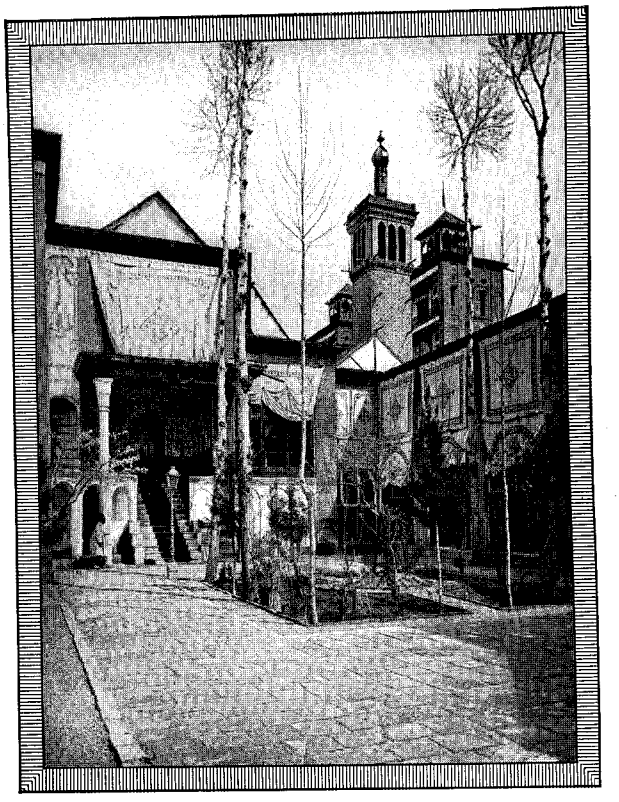
me; I took part in the drives, in the games at billiards, in the concerts, in all the journeys. We went to Vichy, to Vittel, to Contrexéville. It was here, at Contrexéville, where he had come for the cure, that I saw him for the last time. His eccentricities, his whims, and his diamonds had produced the usual effect on the peaceable population of the town.

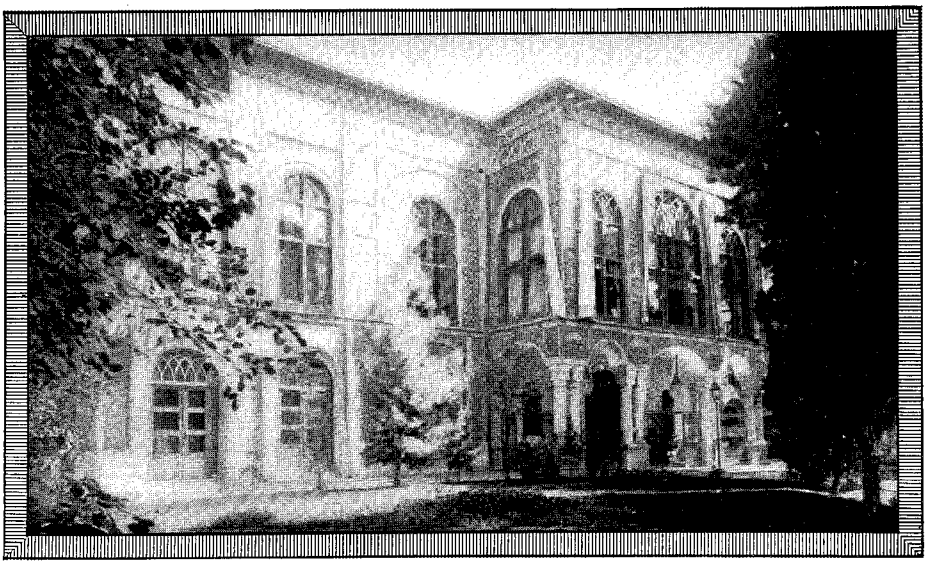
A few days after his arrival, hearing that Her Imperial Highness the Grand Duchess Vladimir of Russia had taken up her quarters at a hotel near his own, he hastened to call and pay his respects, and departed from his habits to the length of inviting her to luncheon.

On the appointed day the Grand Duchess, alighting from her carriage before the residence of her host, found the Shah waiting for her on the threshold, attired in a gray frock-coat, with a rose in his buttonhole. He ceremoniously led her by the hand to the dining-room, making her walk through his rooms, the floors of which he had had covered with the wonderful carpets that accompanied him on all his journeys. The Princess, charmed with these delicate attentions on the great man's part, was beginning to congratulate herself on the pleasant surprise that Persian civilization caused her, when — we had hardly sat down at the table — a chamberlain approached the King of Kings, bowed low, and handed him a gold salver on which lay a queer-looking and at first unrecognizable object. The Shah, without blinking, carelessly put out his hand, took the thing between his fingers, and, with an easy and familiar movement, inserted it in his jaw. It was a set of false teeth. Imagine the consternation!



THE SHAH'S CHIEF PALACE AT TEHERAN

The day after the luncheon, the Princess



THE PALACE WHERE THE SHAH DIED

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Vladimir received a bale of Persian carpets of inestimable value, accompanied by a letter from the grand vizir, begging her, in the name of his sovereign, to accept this present, His Majesty having declared that he would not allow other feet to tread carpets on which Her Imperial Highness' had rested.

I, less fortunate than the Grand Duchess, never, alas! succeeded in obtaining possession of the one and only carpet that Muzaffr-ed-Din had deigned, quite spontaneously, to offer me.

"My ministers will see that you get it," he said.

When the day for his departure for Persia drew near, I thought that it would be wise to ask the court minister in my most respectful manner for my carpet.

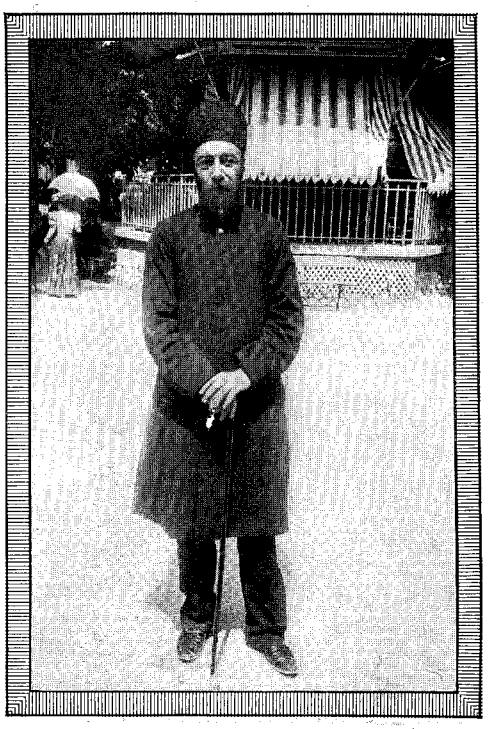
"Oh," he replied, "does it belong to you? I am sorry to say that it has been packed up, by mistake, with the others. If you want it, they can give it to you in the train."

As I was to accompany our guest as far as the German frontier, I waited until we had left Vichy, and then discreetly repeated my request at the first stop.

"Certainly," said the minister; "you shall have it at the next station."

I was beginning to feel uneasy. At the following stopping-place there was no sign of a carpet. We were approaching the frontier, where my mission ended. I therefore resolved to apply to the minister of public works.

THE SHAH PIGEON-SHOOTING



MOHAMED KHAN, THE PERSIAN COURT MINISTER, WHO SAVED THE SHAH'S LIFE AT THE TIME OF HIS ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION IN PARIS

"Your Excellency ——"

"Your carpet?" he broke in. "Quite right, my dear M. Paoli. The orders have been given, and you shall have it when you leave us at the other station."

But here again, alas, nothing! And, as I complained to a third Excellency of this strange piece of neglect —

"It's an omission. Come with us as far as Strassburg, where you will receive satisfaction."

At this rate, they would have carried me, by easy stages, to Teheran. I therefore gave up all hope of my carpet; and, taking leave of these amiable functionaries, I heard the good Shah's voice crying in the distance:

"Good-by, Paoli, worthy Paoli! — till our next meeting!"

I never saw him again.

[THE APRIL INSTALMENT OF M. PAOLI'S REMINISCENCES WILL DEAL WITH HIS RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CZAR OF RUSSIA]

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THE PRETENSIONS OF CHARLOTTE

BY

WALTER BEACH HAY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WORTH BREHM

"CHARLOTTE CRANDALL, come here this very instant!" cried a sharp, penetrating voice. "Let me speak to you again and you'll know it!"

The speaker was a tall, thin, sour-appearing woman of middle age. Her hair, black without a single trace of gray, was parted in the center and drawn back into a small knot on top of her head, a knot so tightly wound that the woman's eyes seemed to be drawn into narrow slits in consequence. Her hands were long and bony, and attracted one by their restless activity; her general appearance was unkempt; she was evidently a person who had known a long life of hard work. Every line of her face and figure, every motion she made, every move, bore this out; she was always at work, and she expected every one about her to follow her example.

Her field of action just now was the kitchen, and she was engaged in the first preparations for dinner. She moved about with surprising agility for one of her years — it was plain that, to her, time was a precious thing. "Charlotte Crandall!" she called again — this time even more sharply.

To this second summons there was a faint answer of "Yes'm" from the porch which opened off the kitchen, and, immediately following the response, a sad-faced child of eleven or twelve entered the room. She was not pretty, nor even good-looking, and her clothes were worn and untidy; there was nothing about her to attract one, except a pained expression that would have touched even a hardened heart.

"You was callin' me?" she asked in a voice that was scarcely audible. There was a certain pathos in her intonation, too; her whole bearing suggested that she was overwhelmed with some great sorrow.

The woman turned quickly and faced the child. "Callin'!" she cried. "Callin'! Well, I jest guess I was callin'!" Then she stopped suddenly. "For heaven's sake, Charlotte! Whatever makes you look so meek and lowly?" she exclaimed.

A faint color came into Charlotte's cheeks, and fire was awakened in her eyes. "I ain't really meek and lowly," she explained, with a quick, nervous accent. "I'm pretendin'."

"Pretendin'!" said the woman, in disgust. "You jest quit your pretendin' and shell them peas. But what you could ever pretend that 'ud make you meek and lowly is beyond me!"

Charlotte began mechanically to shell the peas. "Well, you see, Mis' Epps, it ain't hard to pretend, if you jest know how," she said. "I began by thinkin' it was ever so long ago. My husband and six sons had all gone away with the Crusaders, and every one of 'em was killed. I was jest overcome with grief when I got the news, which was brought back by the only man in the whole lot that wasn't killed. I simply sat down and wept and wept. And, as if that wasn't enough bad luck for one poor woman to bear, along come a band of marauding knights and besieged the castle, and my servants, and slaves, and vassals, and pages, and every one, was all killed in trying to protect me from harm. And when they was all dead, I jest went up to the very highest-up room in the very tallest tower, and sat down with Christian resignation to meet my fate. I could hear the heavy tramp of feet upon the stairs. It was jest awful, but I didn't shriek or make no noise; and jest as those fierce men was breakin' in the door to my room, you called, Mis' Epps. You always *do* call," cried the girl vehemently, "jest when things is gettin' inter'stin'. I was jest bravely wonderin' what they'd do to me, when you yelled and spoiled it all." The child had paused in her work, and her hands lay idle in her lap.

"Here, that'll do!" exclaimed Mrs. Epps. "You've done enough pretendin' for one day — you jest naturally get in and work. What you think I sleep and feed you for, anyway?"

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"'CHARLOTTE CRANDALL, COME HERE THIS VERY INSTANT!'"

At this, Charlotte again mechanically took up her task. For some moments there was silence in the room; then the girl asked, "Was you really wonderin' why you sleep and feed me, Mis' Epps?"

Mrs. Epps made no reply; her slow mind was no match for the swift and unexpected mental skirmishes of the child, and she had been caught unaware too many times to plunge blindly into even the most innocent appearing argument.

Charlotte seemed not the least discouraged at the lack of interest displayed by her companion, and, altogether disregarding the heavy silence that clung about Mrs. Epps, spoke again: "Well, you know I wouldn't amount to much if I didn't get some food and sleep. I couldn't work so very long without them."

"Work!" said Mrs. Epps scornfully, suddenly forgetting herself. "Work! It's precious little work you *ever* do!"

"Yes'm," replied Charlotte, assuming a very meek tone. "But, you see, Mis' Epps, it's mighty little sleep I get, too, and I could eat *more* food'n I get!" Then, quick as a flash, her manner changed, and there was a passionate ring in her voice. "I wish," she said, "I was a hog! Hogs ain't perticular what they get, but they get all they want, and all they have to do is jest to grow fat. No one ever tried to make me fat. They all try to see how very much I can work on a very little. You're tryin' to see how much you kin git out of me, and I'm tryin' to see how little. I've made up my mind to work jest accordin' to the way you treat me. It won't do you any good to strike me," she continued, as Mrs. Epps' hand rose threateningly. "I'm not afraid. If you hit me, I'll pretend I'm dead, and then you'll git no work out of me at all." She paused reflectively. "I'll pretend you're the maraudin' band that took me and killed me; and the more you beat me, the more I'll look happy—I won't be here, you know; I'll be in Paradise with my husband and six sons that was killed in the Crusades, and my joy will be so beautiful that it will shine forth on my earthly visage!"

The woman's hand slowly descended to her side without inflicting any harm.

"That's right," said Charlotte. "It's a good thing to listen to reason sometimes, and you know well enough that you or Mr. Epps never gained nothin' by beating me — and you won't ever, either! I'm glad I'm incorrigible and rebellious, and I'm glad I ain't afraid of any one — not even the minister, and I'll answer him up jest as I did last time if he warns me any more about the everlasting torments of the hereafter. He meant hell, but he daren't say

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it, for fear folks 'ud think he was swearin'. I'd answer him jest as I did then, and I'd say I didn't expect to mind the change much, and I'll bet you I'd be shellin' peas down there for you jest the same as here!"

"You say another word, Charlotte Crandall," cried Mrs. Epps, "and I'll strike you, good or no good. I won't have such awful talk in my house!"

"There, that's done!" said Charlotte calmly. By the delighted sparkle in her eye, it was evident that she was enjoying her mistress' anger; but she gave no sign other than this that she was aware of having transgressed in the slightest. "I suppose it's the potaters next," she went on. "I like mine best with their jackets on — every one would if they had to do their own peelin'."

She fell to work with a will on the potatoes, and it was surprising to note the speed and dexterity with which her fingers moved; it did not seem possible that a dreamer could work so well. She was silent for a while; then she broke out so suddenly that Mrs. Epps jumped.

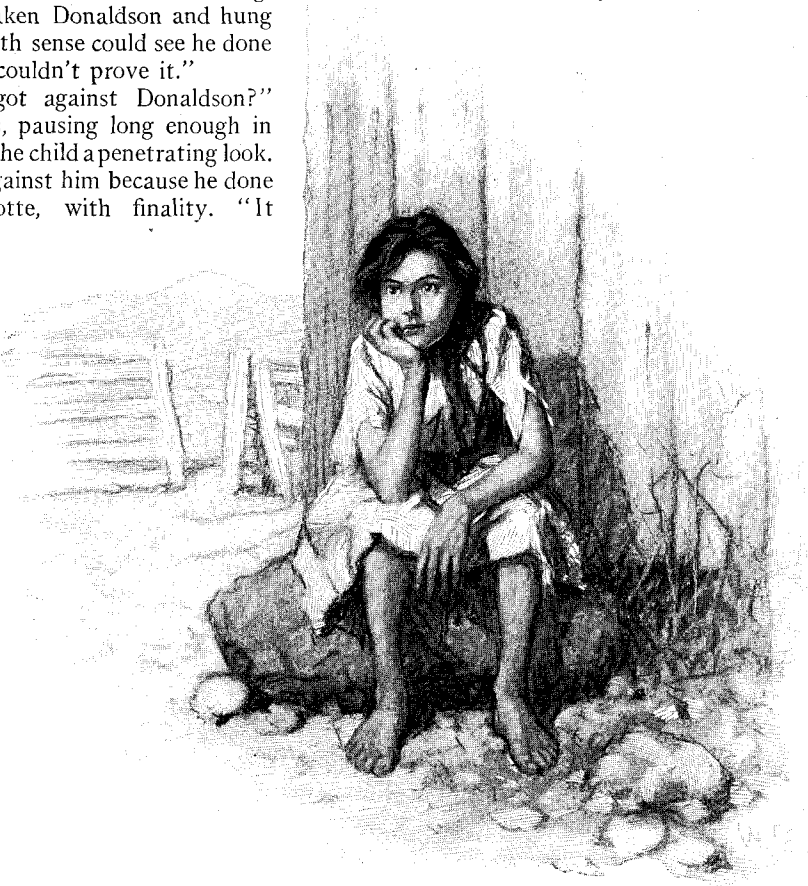
"I wish," she said, with much feeling, "they'd have taken Donaldson and hung him! Any one with sense could see he done it, even if they couldn't prove it."

"What you got against Donaldson?" asked Mrs. Epps, pausing long enough in her work to give the child a penetrating look.

"I've got it against him because he done it," said Charlotte, with finality. "It ain't speakin' very well for a man to kill another man jest because he didn't like him, and for no other reason, and then let some one else get punished jest because he was afraid to take his own medicine. I like Mr. Johnston — he's polite; he tips his hat, and says 'thank you' and 'please' — I've heard him dozens of times."

"Now, Charlotte," put in Mrs. Epps, "you mustn't say you know he done it, because you don't know nothin' of the kind — maybe he did and maybe he didn't."

"He done it," responded Charlotte, not in the least moved. "He used to beat his wife, and he was cruel to his baby, and they had to run away and leave him." The girl took a long breath, her cheeks suddenly turned deep crimson, and her eyes flashed dangerously. "I'd like to see my husband try to beat me!" she cried. "He'd not do it more 'an once. I'd fight back and I'd make him afraid of me. If I was Donaldson's wife, I'd ——" She broke into a full laugh at this. "That's silly to think about, for I wouldn't ever have been fool enough to marry Donaldson — I know men too well," she said, in a manner strangely mature. She had stopped work again, and was looking out of the window and across the beautiful meadow to the still more beautiful hills beyond. "But, jest the samey, if I was a woman grown and owned my own farm, my very own farm, I'd not let my husband come along and bend my will. No, siree. If



CHARLOTTE

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I wanted the truck garden in the north field near the house, it wouldn't be put down at the far end of the south field, not for no reason. I'd ——"

Mrs. Epps knew that this was meant as a personal attack, and whether it was made in the spirit of contempt or simply as an encouragement to open rebellion was all one and the same to her — it was, in either case, such flagrant presumption as to be deserving of a severe reprimand, and at this point in the discourse she prepared to make a sudden descent on the culprit. She was anticipated in her designs, however; for a large, muscular man of rough appearance, somewhat Mrs. Epps' junior, stepped quickly into the room and took Charlotte roughly by the shoulder.

"See here, you," he said in no gentle tone, shaking the child; then he turned to the woman. "What do you mean by letting her talk like that?" he said. "I'm *master* here — do you understand? *Master!*"

Charlotte turned fearlessly on the man. "Epps," she said, "you're a bully. I won't take it back, and I'll think it, even if you do hit me." At this he gave her a stinging slap on the cheek, which she received with wonderful self-control.

"Jest talk that way some more," said the man tauntingly; but his victim was silent, and refused even to look at him — she was pretending to herself that he was not there. He left her alone after a moment or so, and went back to his work, showering the woman and girl with profanity and threats as he departed.

Charlotte talked no more that day. She worked on steadily at whatever task was before her, but by the look in her eyes it was clear that her mind was far away. That night she stole off to bed as early as she could, and the next morning she was gone.

Work was neglected while they searched about the place, but Charlotte was nowhere to be found. Epps himself was the most anxious of the searchers. He felt that, should Charlotte get away and not be found, the report would go abroad that she had been treated so badly that she could no longer endure life on the Epps farm. But their painstaking efforts to locate the child's whereabouts were unrewarded. They were somewhat handicapped, of course, by the fact that they did not want it to become generally known that Charlotte had run away. After they had devoted all the time that they could spare, they gave up the quest as hopeless. She was gone, and there was nothing to do but make the best of it.

Three days later, Mrs. Epps, busily engaged in her kitchen as usual, was startled, on turning round, to find Charlotte standing in the doorway leading from the porch. "Lord save us!" cried the woman fervently.

"How-dy-do," the girl said. "Did I scare you? You see, I jest came back — I didn't have any place else to go. I guess you'll let me stay; I'm handy to have about, you know."

"What made you run away?" asked the woman. "Was it because Epps slapped you?"

"I'm not quite sure," replied Charlotte. "I think maybe that was what started me. You see, I began to pretend I was a beautiful slave girl, and my father had been whipped to death, while I stood by without being able to protect him one mite, and my mother had been sold to an awful cruel master 'way down South. Then I jest got so interested, I forgot all about you folks, and I really was jest that poor nigger girl, and there wasn't nothing else for me to do but to run away from my master and missus, who were very cruel and heartless. It was the easiest pretendin' I ever did in my life. So I jest ran off and hid in the bushes, and pretended some more that the hounds and the men, with guns and knives, were out after me, and pressin' on me tighter and tighter. And after a while I found you were all lookin' for me, and I had a grand time feelin' creepy and unhappy. I was sorry when you give it up, because it kind of spoiled the game; but I didn't care much, for I had a fine time jest chasing around and making b'lieve things was after me."

"Where'd you get fed?" asked Mrs. Epps. "You don't look as if you'd had much to eat."

"'A wanderin' minstrel,'" replied Charlotte, "'aged and poor, he begged his food from door to door.'"

"You've got too much learnin' for one of your size," the woman said.

"That ain't really the truth," the girl remarked. "I lived on berries and other things that didn't need to be cooked. It was fine to get away where you couldn't even smell victuals."

"Don't you think you need a good lickin'?" asked Mrs. Epps.

"You can lick me, if you want to," Charlotte said placidly. "It'd be a fine ending for the beautiful slave girl. I'd pretend she was caught, and of course then she would be brought back and licked. I ain't afraid. See what I've got!" She drew from the folds of her dress a rusty revolver.

She seemed pleased with her climax, for she laughed as Mrs. Epps drew back with a stifled exclamation.

"There's nothin' to be afraid of," she said reassuringly. "It's no good for *shootin'* now, but it's Donaldson's gun. It's the one he used, you know. I found it under a big rock by the

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creek when I was hidin'. He'll git his, now. It's evidence — it's the evidence they couldn't find."

Mrs. Epps swayed a little — there was a frightened catch in her voice as she spoke. "What you so hard on Donaldson for?" she asked unsteadily.

"It'll save Mr. Johnston," said the girl simply; "and, what's more, I never had no use for Donaldson, and I don't care who knows it."

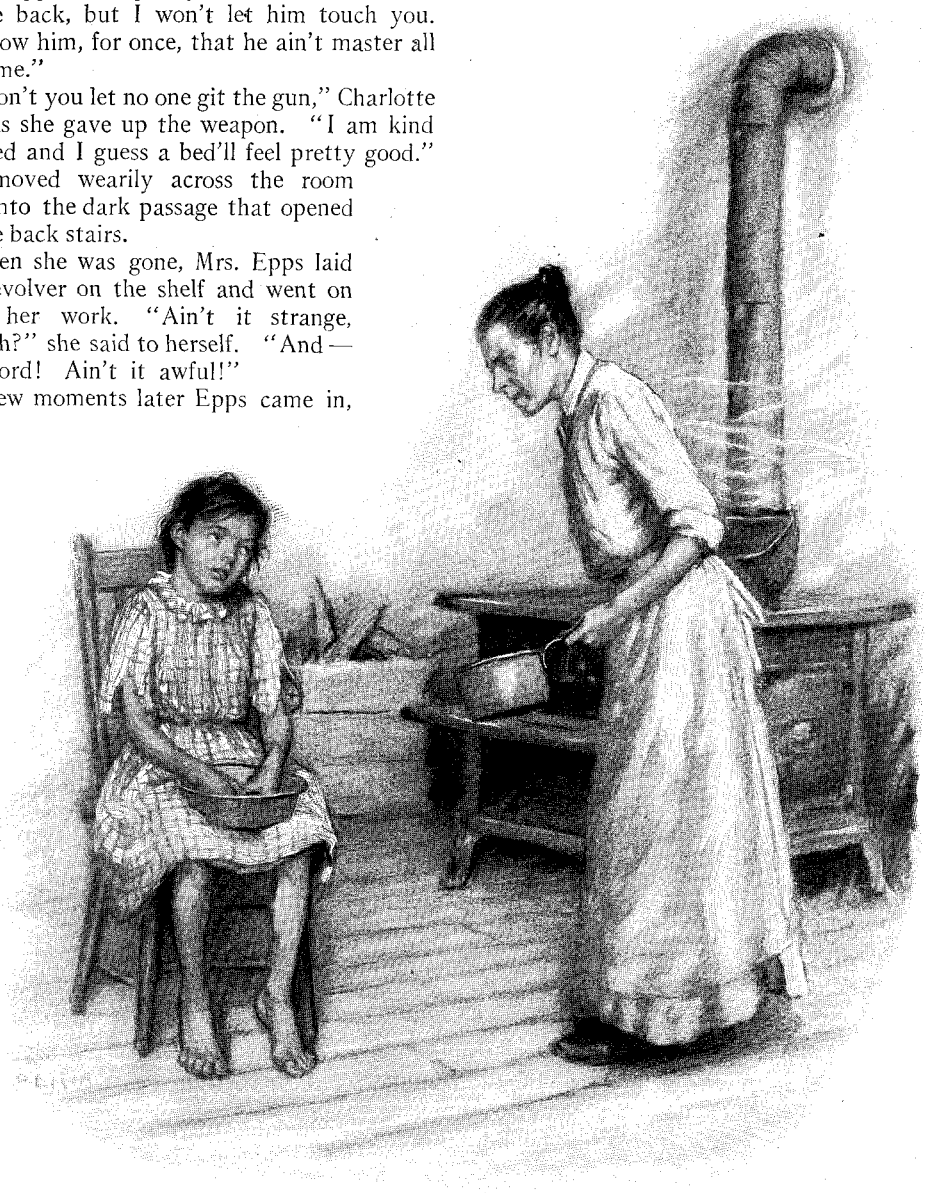
"Give me the gun," said the woman; there was something almost kindly in her voice. "You're all pegged out; run along and git into bed. Epps'll be pretty mad when he finds you're back, but I won't let him touch you. I'll show him, for once, that he ain't master all the time."

"Don't you let no one git the gun," Charlotte said as she gave up the weapon. "I am kind of tired and I guess a bed'll feel pretty good." She moved wearily across the room and into the dark passage that opened on the back stairs.

When she was gone, Mrs. Epps laid the revolver on the shelf and went on with her work. "Ain't it strange, though?" she said to herself. "And — oh, Lord! Ain't it awful!"

A few moments later Epps came in, and his wife turned on him sternly. "Epps," she said, "Charlotte Crandall's back."

The man swore horribly and asked where the child was now. Mrs. Epps made no reply until her husband had quite exhausted his abundant supply of appropriate profanity; then she said slowly: "Epps, you've called yourself master here for a good many years. Well, here's one time when you ain't the master. You ain't goin' to touch that child. This ranch is mine — there's six hundred acres, and they're all mine; and the money in the bank's mine; and this



"'WORK! IT'S PRECIOUS LITTLE WORK YOU EVER DO!'"

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house is mine; and all the stock's mine, and the crops. I've held out against you that far, and here's once more when I'm goin' to have my way — I ain't quite broken. You're not to strike that child.

"You needn't say a thing. She's all tired out and she's gone up to bed. It was a game she was playin', and while she was hidin' she found Donaldson's gun, and she's jest hopin' the evidence'll hang him. Oh, Epps, ain't it awful — and to think Donaldson's her father!"

The man was trembling. "It won't do no good to hang Donaldson now," he said. "He got killed in a drunken row last night. Where's the gun?"

The woman produced the weapon from the shelf. "It's his," she said. "There's no question. See the 'D' scratched in. I've seen him carry it."

Epps stretched out a hand which he vainly tried to hold steady. "Give it to me — I don't believe it's Donaldson's gun anyhow," he said. "Even if it is, it can't do him no harm now."

"But it can save Johnston," remarked his wife.

"They let Johnston go — they couldn't hold him on the proof they had," said Epps uneasily. "Give me the gun. It's no good to anyone now."

"What makes you act so queer? What are you a-tremblin' for? What's the matter with you, anyway? The gun's no good to you, either," said his wife.

The man came a step forward. "'D'" he said in an uncertain voice, "can stand for something besides Donaldson. It could stand for a Christian name; it could stand for — David, or maybe Daniel ——"

His wife drew back. "Oh," she breathed faintly. "I see. You — you done it —you! I knew you hated him — but I never thought— nobody ever thought that — you would do a thing like that. Don't you come near me! Jest you take a step, and I'll scream — the men are near enough to hear me. You jest come near to me, and I'll tell 'em what you said!"

He reached out his hand again. "Give me that gun," he said again. "I'll hide it this time so as nobody'll ever find it again; then nobody'll ever know."

"Only Charlotte," added his wife. "The best thing you can do, Epps, is to go away somewhere — somewhere good and far away; I don't care where. I can save you till you get a safe start; I can't promise to do more if it ever gets out. Perhaps I'm wrong in doin' this much for you; but you're my husband, even if you weren't ever very kind to me. I never had no romance in my life; I've always had jest work and trouble — and now this awful thing — this awful thing that's got to be lived down."

"You're afraid of the kid," said the man. "I'll silence her for keeps."

"I'm not afraid of the kid, and you'll not touch her," responded the woman defiantly. "She's the nearest thing to a romance that ever come into my life. You ain't ever goin' to hurt Charlotte again. I've a strange feelin' here" — the woman put her hand to her heart — "it's a dull sort of pain. I never had it before. I want you to go away — I want you to clear out — I don't want to never see you again. I'll keep Charlotte — I won't ever give her up. And as for you, if you ever dare to come back, I'll tell all I know, and — I'll keep the gun to prove it. I want you to go — don't think for a moment that I'm foolin'."

The woman faced the man almost fiercely. Their eyes met, and his fell under her steady gaze. His outstretched hand fell to his side; he murmured something, and, mumbling to himself, left the room. The woman watched him pass down the path outside, through the gate, and away — whither she neither knew nor cared. The lines of her face seemed to deepen as she looked out on the man who for a dozen years or more had been her husband, looked out upon him and saw him passing from her life; but her lip did not tremble, nor was there a trace of a tear in her eyes.

But, though she appeared so unmoved, she was unconscious of all that went on about her. She did not see a slender child come cautiously from the dark passageway. She thought, if she thought of the matter at all, that she was alone. The piteous voice of the child called her back to herself: "Mis' Epps!" She turned; Charlotte was at her side. The girl threw her arms around the woman's neck. "Oh, Mis' Epps," she sobbed, "I'm so sorry! I wouldn't have fetched it if I'd 'a' known. But I'll try to make it up the best I kin. If you'll jest pretend you're my mother, I'll pretend I'm your little girl jest as hard as I know how."

"There, there, Charlotte," Mrs. Epps said gently, "never mind. Don't cry. I'll pretend, if you'll jest show me how. I never had no little girl, and you never really had no mother."

Charlotte hid her face for a moment; then she looked up. "Pretendin' is awful easy when you jest know how, and I'll show you how." And they laughed softly together.

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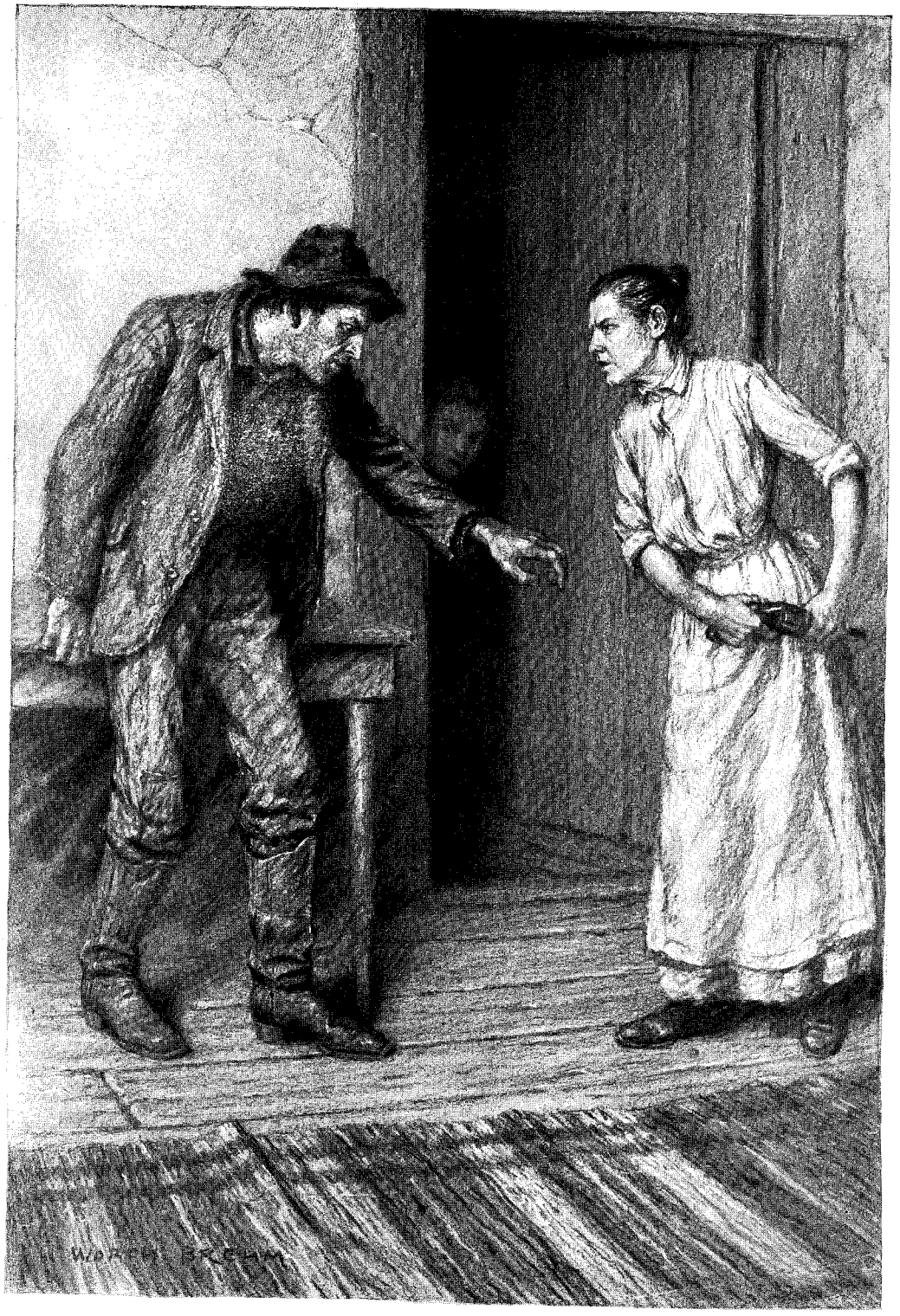

"'I'LL KEEP THE GUN TO PROVE IT'"

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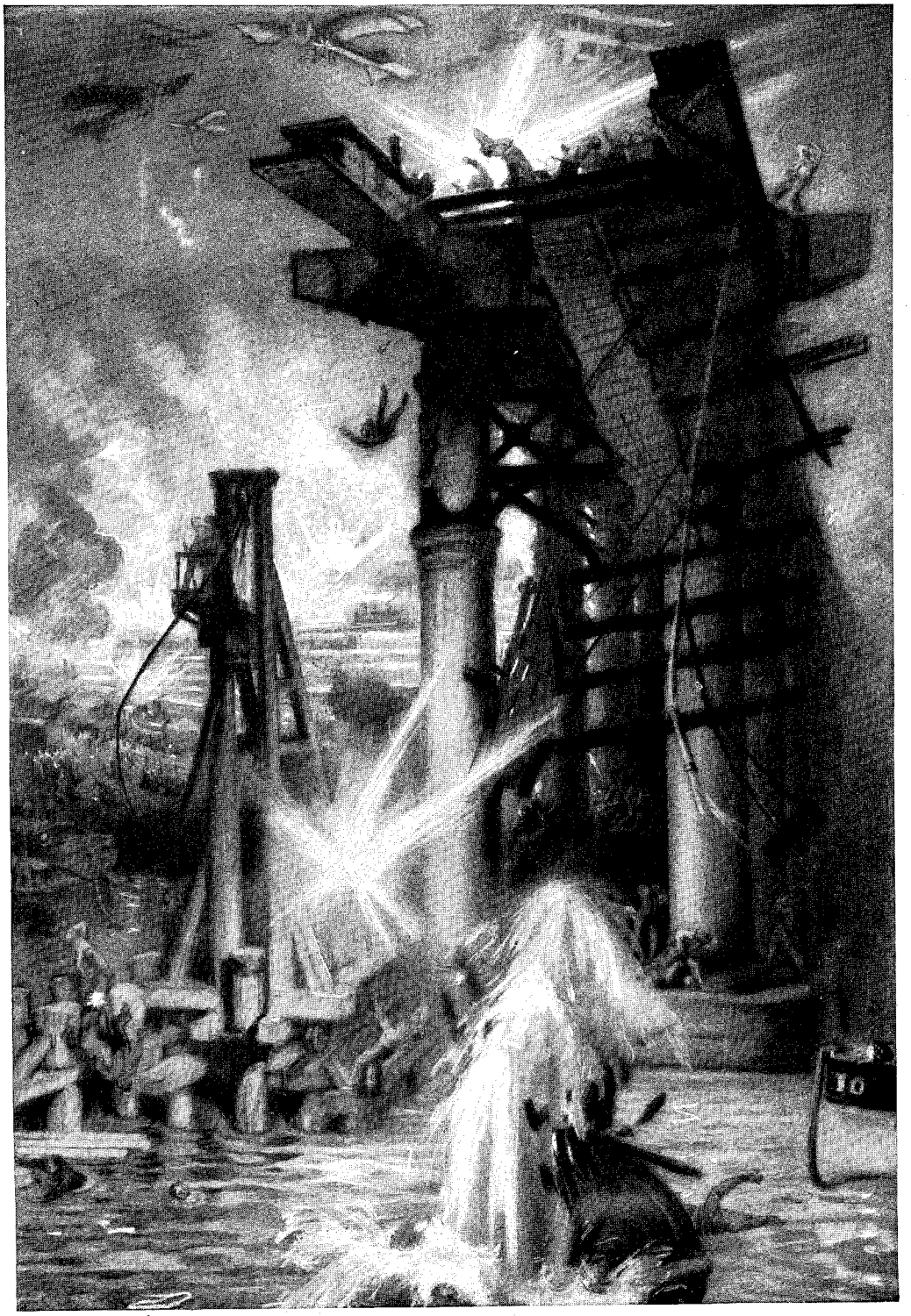

Drawn by André Castaigne

"IN THE INTENSE LIGHT, THE FLYING-MACHINES WERE VISIBLE"

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THE JOINT IN THE HARNESS

BY

"OLE LUK-OIE"

ILLUSTRATIONS (SEE FRONTISPIECE) BY ANDRÉ CASTAIGNE

Railways are the arteries of modern armies. Vitality decreases when they are blocked, and terminates when they are permanently severed.—"IMPERIAL STRATEGY," 1906.

"HISS — click — *bang!*"

The monster pile sank perceptibly as the monkey descended with a thud, and the ooze at its foot quivered in ripples of protest which expanded into circles of silver where they caught the electric light. A gout of oil shooting out on to the mud formed a blot of nacreous color, slowly fading as it spread, and became lost in the film of scum. The steam pile-driver rained vicious blows with almost the precision of a Nasmyth hammer, its armored-hose steam-pipe kicking convulsively in the air in a grotesque dance to the measure.

Behind the pile-driver, by the loaded trucks, waited a group of men. They were for the time all quite idle, pending the arrival of their turn with its allotted task. Some were lying asleep; some were leaning against trucks, smoking, or sitting on the rails, head in hand, elbows on knees; others were squatting on the timbers, playing a mysterious game of cards by the light of a naked candle, which burned steadily without a shade in the still air.

In their dirty suits of dungaree, it was impossible to say exactly what these men were. To a soldier, however, the actions of some of them hinted that they might be soldiers. One was drumming with two bolts on a fish-plate, keeping time to the lilt of a rollicking rag-time air which a second was softly playing on a mouth-organ. Whatever their race,— for music-halls have made rag-time music international,— it was more like a soldier than an ordinary workman to produce a mouth-organ to keep things going in the small hours of the morning. Their talk settled the point: they were soldiers — sappers, to be exact.

Their task would soon come, when, at the last stroke of the monkey, a new pile would have to be hauled into position, or, if a pile-pier were completed, the heavy balks be placed and the sleepers and rails spiked down. Then the cumbrous caterpillar truck would be pushed slowly forward over the creaking timbers of the newly finished span to a fresh position, where its paean of brute force would start again. Behind these men, along the pile-bridge, stretched a line of trucks loaded with balks, rails, and sleepers; and alongside, downstream, floated fresh piles, swaying to and fro in the stream as they waited to be towed out, in their turn. In the half-gloom they looked like captive saurians, as the flood foamed against the blunt snouts and their wet edges gleamed.

A young man sat in his shirt-sleeves, smoking, watch in hand. He was a pleasant-looking young fellow — the engineer officer on duty. Every now and again he made a note in a pocket-book as he took the time, for he was timing progress. Slow work it seemed to him, this advance by inches, for each blow produced small visible result in the tenacious silt; but, if slow, it was sure and not entirely mechanical, for every stroke, with its hiss-click-bang seemed to him to say in a tone of cheerful confidence, "*So*-much-done," "*Sso*-much-DONE," and the pile-driver regulated the progress.

The pile-driving machine was carried on a caterpillar-like truck of many wheels, some of which were clamped to the rails of the bridge. At its rear end was the boiler; in front, supported by long arms, which overhung the end of the bridge by some distance, was the gaunt framework and guide, almost hugging the pile which the monkey above was maltreating. The end of the bridge had reached a point, about the center of the river, where the water shoaled on a sandy mud-flat; but from below the many-wheeled truck, back to the near bank of the

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river, the dark stream was swirling against the piles, a man's height underneath. So swift was the current that it was not good to gaze for long down between the sleepers at the oily water streaking past, with a chuckle, from the moonlight into the shadow of the bridge and out into the light again.

There was bustle, there was haste, but there was also method on this low-level bridge. For long periods comparative calm reigned, with no other sound than the hiss of the steam, the rush of the water, the roar of the high-pressure flare lights, the distant clang of the riveters' hammers on high, and the refrain of the pile-driver, monotonous on the night air as the tom-tom obligato of a Persian nautch-song. But when the whistles shrilled, this peace, such as it was, changed to turmoil. Sheaves squealed in the blocks, men grunted as they hove on the falls of tackles, and bolts and spikes were hammered home. The insistent key-note of the scheme was work — strenuous, unresting work.

The river was wide. Even allowing for the deceptive moonlight, it seemed a quarter of a mile from bank to bank. A burnished strip in the bright light of a full moon, it was dotted here and there with eyots that stood out dark. It flowed between steep banks at the bottom of an amphitheater — a complete circle of hills, save for the gaps through which ran the river and the railway which had crossed it.

Away on the far side, starting from a point on the dry sand, in prolongation of the pile-bridge, and swinging in a double curve up the steep bank, were a number of smoking naphtha-lamps. Below, in the bed of the river, groups of men were digging out boulders, the metallic click of their crowbars sounding faintly across the water. Antlike strings of workers were carrying the loosened stones to a causeway that was growing up in alignment with the bridge. Higher up, following the curve of lights, and silhouetted against clouds of illumined dust, a swarm of toilers were excavating the cutting that was to take the steep deviation loop from the level of the pile-bridge up to the main line.

But, after all, neither this bridge nor its approaches — though at present the center of pressure and activity — was the feature of the scene; for, just above, sixty feet up, loomed the broken high-level bridge. With its huge girders and titanic piers, it dwarfed its lowly neighbor and dominated everything, its grandeur accentuated by the chasm of the break in its center. In this gap stood three unharmed piers, like sentries, gaunt, black, and shining. A fourth — the damaged pier — was surrounded by a cluster of staging and tall derrick-masts dripping ropes and tackle, and was completed on top by a funnel-mouth, the under sides of which stood out darkly against the arc-light above.

In the centers of three of the broken spaces were large timber stages, each in a different state of completion, but all alike in that they twinkled with lights and swarmed with men, some climbing, some in slings, but all hammering, boring, or sawing like demons. Between the piers lay the broken girders, moved to one side, half in, half out of the water — a network of iron through which the muddy river foamed.

Above the derricks and the tangle of cordage — carried on timber frames placed at intervals along the girders — two steel cables gleamed in the moonlight. Every few minutes, with the bleat of a motor-horn, a dark body, upon which glowed a red lamp, silently glided out upon them from one end of the bridge to a point above the broken pier. It stopped, a trap opened, and a glistening cascade of concrete poured with a rattle into the maw of the funnel and so down into the hollow iron pier. Then the dark body slid back to its lair at the bridge-end as silently as it had come out. Beyond, under the big girders, could be seen a floating bridge that stretched from bank to bank.

The spectacle of the colossal bridge reaching out majestically from each dim bank, with this gaping wound in its center, was pathetic. The blank ends stood up opposite each other, dumb but reproachful witnesses of the havoc below.

From a little distance it was like a fairy scene. Over all shone the great moon. Above the high-level bridge the blinking arc-lamps shed their violet rays, thrown downward by the shades, so that they formed shimmering cones with edges clearly defined against the night beyond. In contrast, the under side of the girders seemed cut from black velvet, and the shadows danced darkly on the water. The riveters' fires along the girders glowed red, the flare-lights on the low-level bridge shone yellow, and golden was the glare on the dust-clouds of the far bank. The crudity of the colors was softened in places by the spirals of escaping steam winding aloft in the calm night air, and the whole gamut of illumination was reproduced in the drawn-out reflections that quivered across the glistening waters to the sluggish pools near the shore.

The low-level bridge was not a safe place to walk about, for there were loose planks, greasy spots, bights of ropes, and other traps for the unwary, and things were continually falling. Sometimes a red-hot rivet would drop from

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above, with a flop and a hiss, into the river. Occasionally a warning shout of "Stand clear!" would ring out, followed by a crash, and perhaps a couple of men would slowly bear away to the shore something on a stretcher. But no one else stopped: there was no sympathetic gathering; the work continued without a pause.

Now and again, from a hilltop to the north the darkness was pierced by a succession of flashes. Flash, flash, came the reply from somewhere to the south; and then, a long medley of dots and dashes between the two points. No use, even for one knowing the code, to try to read the messages, for these were in cipher. If there were still any doubt as to the nature of the toilers, this would settle the matter; for no civil works would require signaling-posts on the surrounding hills.

The moon grew more mellow as it sank. A mist rose from the waters, creeping up till it lay, a solid white mass, over the river, halfway up the giant piers — a damp mist suggestive of malaria, not one to spend a night in; but no workers left the bridge.

The moon faded blood-red into the haze. The air turned colder as the night wore on. Another day dawned, at first gray and sad, then rosy and golden. But, heedless of the glory of the changing heavens, the workers toiled on, and there could be heard rising from the moist white blanket the song of the pile-driver.

In the warmth of the rising sun, the mist curled off the water in thin wisps; the lights went out, and the scene of the night's toil stood revealed. The day exposed all the squalor, grime, and discomfort — the muddy, swirling water, the wet and weary men, the burnt-out lamps, dripping timbers, and rusty ironwork. Even those iridescent blots that had seemed so beautiful in the light of the moon or the glare of electricity showed up for what they were — foul pools of viscid oil or tar.

II

It was again night.

Throughout the livelong day the work had proceeded, as shift relieved shift.

It was not till some time after the mist had risen that the same young engineer, once again on night duty, left the work. Closing his note-book, he picked his way, stepping carefully from sleeper to sleeper, lantern in hand, along the low-level bridge, which had grown in length and by now passed the little mud-flat. He buttoned his jacket as he went, for, no longer at work, he felt the damp chill of the mist, which was dripping from his hair and mustache. A thick-set man, his squatness was exaggerated by bulging pockets filled with note-books; from one protruded a foot-rule. As he passed under the glare at the end of the bridge, he smiled. Of a sanguine temperament, he was cheered by the progress of his work at a time when others were depressed. Stumbling on abstractedly over the lighted area into the comparative gloom over the dry mud beyond, he had just climbed above fog-level and proceeded scarcely a hundred yards, when a hoarse voice addressed him from the shadow of a bush, where a man was sitting smoking. It was that of the Railway Traffic Officer — otherwise known as the "Shunter."

"Well, my Captain of Plumbers, how goes it? Aren't you across yet?"

"Hullo, is that you? I'm just off up to see my Chief. What are you doing down here, away from your beloved yard? What's your grumble now? Come, talk with me a while and learn something."

"Oh, I'm taking half an hour off, watching the illuminations and looking for you in this deadly mist. Things above are quite hopeless. Sit down and smoke."

"Not I; I'm too cold. You come and stroll, or dance with me all in the moonlight, you old truck-fancier." With that he executed a *pas seul*, scuffling about in what he called a "cellar flap."

The other got up and joined him, but not in the dance. A taller and older man, he was thin and hollow-chested. There was light enough to see that he wore a uniform and had a serious expression. He coughed violently.

"I say, it's just as well you don't have to work in that mist; you would soon cease to trouble us. With that cough, I can forgive you for hogging it in the lap of luxury up above, so snug among your trucks. Walk as far as the pontoons?"

With that, the "Plumber" took a frayed cigar out of his pocket and examined it ruefully, and the two strolled off toward the invisible pontoon-bridge.

"You seem very cheerful, young man, and not as if you had just spent half a shift in that fog. Have you struck a spouting-well of liquid gold with that beastly noise machine of yours, or have you discovered a ford fit for railway traffic? What is it? *I* don't see much to dance about."

The "Shunter," not being of a sanguine temperament, was a much-worried man; for, as time went on, he had not the satisfaction of

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seeing visible progress made: on the contrary, every hour made his position more hopeless and more complicated.

"That's just it; we should make the most of all our little gifts, and smile at anything we can, just now. Old man, she's a beauty. That little steam pile-driver is going to save the situation — save the Third Army. Just listen to her now, snorting and butting so prettily down there. It's music."

He continued: "I've now timed another four spans — sixteen more beastly piles — being put in, and it will take us, at the present rate, barring cataclysms, just fifty-one hours from midnight, say forty-eight from now, till the rails are fished up and the first train runs across. Let's see; this is Monday morning. That is, by three o'clock the morning after next — Wednesday. I told my Chief six o'clock, yesterday, and as the Commandant has wired that all over the Theater ——"

"What the deuce are you talking about?" snarled the other.

"I thought you'd say that; why, the Theater of Operations, of course. All the papers call it that. Over the whole blooming country, if you like it better."

There was only a grunt for reply.

"I shall let it stay at that, which will give me a margin of three hours for 'unforeseen contingencies'; not that it is necessary, 'cos there ain't going to be any. I've foreseen all. The men need no driving; they are still working like devils. I tell you, '*Mit* Hast, ohne Rast' is our motto; but I wonder how long they can stand the strain. Some are already used up. Eight hours on and eight hours off is pretty stiff, you know, and the mist knocks out all the chesty ones. But it's the ——"

"Yes, yes; what's the use of giving me all this flip-flap? I'm not a correspondent. Come to the point."

"Well, I think the Third Army should see the first train reach them, say, at noon on Wednesday; followed, I suppose, by a solid stream of 'em. However, *my* job's done when the first train gets across."

"Oh, I'll shove trains enough across when the time comes, but they won't be the ones they want first. Before I prepare for this great event, tell me, are you *sure?* Have you taken every factor into your calculations — made allowance for everything?"

"Yes, old croaker, everything. I've foreseen every single thing within the wildest dreams of probability. The deviation approach on this side is already done, and is working. The earthwork on the other side'll be done in twelve hours and the rails laid in twelve more, so all that will be done before my show. If only we could have put in trestles instead of piles, we should have been across this cursed river by now." He paused a moment in thought, and the two paced on in silence.

"I am sorry for the never-to-be-sufficiently-execrated fool who reported that this river could be trestled. He will be the cause if the army gets scuppered; but he'll probably arrange to be killed, I should think. Anyway, taking the pile-bridging as the slowest part, it is the ruling factor, and fixes the time, and, I tell you, it is moving. '*Mit* Hast, ohne Rast' is our ——"

"Oh, damn your motto; if you say it again, or talk of Sturm und Drang, I'll hit you. How about accidents — floods?"

"All right, all right; slowly, softly, catchee monkey. There's not the remotest chance of an accident. I have crowds of timber, piles, and stuff all ready. The driver ain't a sensitive plant, exactly. Boiler's new and working at low pressure. As to floods, the glass is high; they can give us forty-eight hours' warning of any storm away up in the hills, and, anyway, it's got to be a biggish flood to rise over my bridge — and that will be finished in fifty-one — I mean forty-eight hours. Besides, even if we do have a flood, so long as we are able to rush across the trucks you have in your yard — and some engines — before it arrives, it won't much matter. That little lot will be enough to keep the army shooting and eating for some days, by which time the high-level bridge will be repaired enough to run over — then so much for the enemy's great demolition!"

"How about their interfering?"

"This place simply stinks of men now since we got the extra infantry and guns — you know that perfectly well. They would need a much larger force than they can spare to attack us. The footling breaks they make in the line ahead don't count; they are made good as soon as done. They can't touch us here; and this is *the* spot." He sighed as he continued: "What a time those poor devils at the front must have had! We've not been sitting on plush settees, eating oysters, exactly, but we've always got our 'vittles reg'lar.' Now, you tell. I am so busy down below, I hear nothing of what's going on."

"I only know that they have further reduced rations — how much reduced I can't say, as the Chief naturally keeps a good deal of the worst news to himself. They've fired almost their last round of gun ammunition, they have had a lot more sickness in the last two days, and they are now dying like flies. It's touch and go whether they can last. It's awful."

"I suppose you're working your head off."

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"Pretty well. I do nothing but send and answer wires, receive traffic, and see stray idiots who want to go to the 'front.' The yard's so crowded with trucks we can't move. I have now 453, including 45 of ammunition; we have already added ten extra sidings, and shall have many more down by the time you're through with the bridge. And what annoys me is that, though I wire till I am blue to stop all trains, the fools keep on automatically cramming up more. They say that the little bridge away back at 94 is weak, and they're rushing everything over they can, in case it breaks. That's your doing. That comes of you scamping your work."

"Couldn't help it; had to get through. It has already carried more trucks than you can deal with, so I don't see what you are grousing about. After we've done here I can see to it again."

"You'd think they might know at the front what a state we are in here; place stiff with trucks chock-a-block. Well, the supply officer comes to me with all the fool telegrams he gets asking for individual pet trucks to be sent up with the first train — single trucks to be sorted out from this mess, mind you. They'll be damned lucky to get any train at all. I must just let them have what comes — I can't shunt. They would have had five trains of forage first, if I hadn't been able to off-load it."

"That's all very well, my boy; but you'll be hanged if you don't send up trucks in the exact order they're wanted. That's what you're for, to sort out and arrange trucks — nothing else. When their stomachs are full, and their tails are up again, they will remember, and some one on the staff will say: 'Where is that incompetent officer who sent up truck 45,672 loaded with Gruyère instead of 45,627 loaded with Double Glo'ster? Haul him out! Try him! Shoot him! Waster! doesn't know his job.' They won't believe you were crowded; not they. Oh, yes; whatever happens, you'll be hanged all right."

With that he whistled offensively.

"Dare say. Can't help it. Can't off-load and re-load without room. As you are here, I wish you would come up and see after Numbers eleven and twelve sidings. There is some hitch, and they are not shoving on as they should. That's one reason why I was looking out for you. I'm expecting two more trains before morning. The main line will be solid with trains and cold engines soon; a lot are cold already — the brutes have emptied the boilers to make their coffee."

"Right-o. Cheer up. I'll come up on my way, though it's against 'professional etiquette.' It's not my job."

"By the way, we caught a brute in plain clothes about two hours ago up near the forage. He had a lot of fusees, and dropped a can of kerosene. We tried him on the spot and ——"

"Yes, we heard a volley, and wondered what it was."

"Just imagine, if the forage had been set on fire! How are you against that sort of thing down here?"

"Outpost system excellent ——"

"I know; but I mean single spies. One man with a stick of dynamite or gelatin would upset all your precious sanguine estimate. Have you allowed for that possibility?"

"That's all right," chuckled the other. "The place is so well guarded that not a man could get to the bridge, dynamo, or engines, without being seen. It's all lit up near the shore ends, and where required, like a billiard-table. They can't get near it, unless they have trained birds or rats to carry dynamite on their tails — eh, what?"

The idea tickled them, and both laughed as they arrived at the deserted pontoon-bridge — strained into a curve by the current. A guard at the end and sundry cable-watchers seated on the decks of the pontoons, cross-legged like images of Buddha, were the only signs of life.

"Pretty dreary for those poor devils in the mist," said the engineer. "Why is there no road traffic now?"

"No transport. We've sent up all we have and can get. That big capture took a lot; crowds of animals have died and motors broken down. Anyway, road transport is no good to deal with the bulk we have to handle. No one expected such delay here, thanks to that infernal fool. The railway is the only thing possible — railway and trucks." Trucks were his obsession.

Turning back toward the pile-bridge, they went down into the mist, where an engine was standing on the low level; and, with much panting from the little locomotive and shrieking of wheels against guard-rails, they were soon speeding out of the mist up the steep grade and sharp curves of the newly laid deviation approach.

As they moved on, their nostrils were greeted with a succession of odors, ranging from the stench of river-mud, through that of dead animals and refuse-pits, up to that of tarpaulins and forage as they reached the station yard. From the top of the bank the white tents of the sleeping troops in the different camps could be seen, for by this time many men as well as trucks had collected at this congested spot, and there was quite a small army, composed of "details," detachments, and individuals seeking their regiments — the flotsam and jetsam of the communications.

The yard, which seemed to weigh so much on the "Shunter's" mind, was a maze of loaded

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trucks — nothing but rolling stock. He must indeed have been a fancier, this railway traffic officer, for his collection was large and varied. Here were covered trucks, open trucks, box trucks, short trucks, bogie trucks, black trucks, brown trucks, gray trucks — all full of supplies for the army ahead. This mass had overflowed the original fan of sidings, and fresh ones had been laid everywhere, inside the yard, outside the yard, even down the streets of the little village — everywhere that the ground was fairly level. In one corner stood huge mountains of forage, some of it not even covered. At frequent intervals in the lanes between the lines of rail strode sentries. Above spluttered electric lights, whose beams were reflected from the shining tarpaulins, and in places there were lamps under the wagons to illumine the dark corners where a man might lurk. On high the lights on the signal-posts twinkled derisively as they waited for the traffic that did not come. The station itself was a roofless ruin.

The engineer proceeded toward a cloud of dust lit up by flare-lights that showed the position of the work on the new sidings, leaving the "Shunter" in his element. After a few minutes he picked his way over to the office of the Commandant, to report to his own Chief, who was there. The Commandant was busy even at this hour, for he had just got a chance to talk on the wire with his distressed senior, the Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army. As the "Plumber" entered, he heard:

"Yes, sir, we shall be through without fail at six on Wednesday morning, and you will have your first train in the afternoon.— What?— Yes.— What?— No, that's the very best we can do.—*Afternoon* of Wednesday.— Yes, sir; yes.— Till then.— Of course; I know.— Yes, we are hustling all we know—" The speaker looked up as the "Plumber" entered.

"Hullo. You've not come to tell me that you're going to put off the time of getting through again?" he snarled in his anxiety. "You've heard what I told the Chief? Is that still right?"

"Quite right, sir; same time — six on Wednesday morning," was the reply.

"I'll tell him again.— Hullo — hullo! Nonsense — eh, what? Line cut again?— Damn them, they cut the line every two minutes! This is the first talk I've had with the Chief for thirty-six hours. However, I told him the main thing, luckily. I wish they had their wireless!"

For five minutes the "Plumber" conferred with his own Chief, who was in charge of all the bridging operations, and was then dismissed: "I'm glad all is going so well. You'd better be getting back. Good night."

"Poor old Commandant!" he thought, as he strode away in the gloom, for the moon was just setting. "No wonder he is a bit ratty, with this responsibility and strain." Just then he almost ran into the "Shunter," who was gazing up into the sky toward the still luminous West.

"Did you see that?" the latter shouted.

"No — what?"

"Something passed overhead; sort of blur in the sky. Heard something, too — soft noise like a motor."

They both looked up. There was nothing in the serene sky but the after-glow of the moon.

"Bird?" suggested the "Plumber."

"Much too big for a bird."

"Vulture — bat — goose — mongoose?" he went on, evidently skeptical; then added quickly:

"Look here, my man, get to bed and rest; you're jumpy from worry and want of sleep. Go to bed; your trucks can't fly off."

"Perhaps you're right; I am chock-full of quinine. I'll turn in. Good night."

The "Shunter" did turn in; but he did not sleep, for the banshee-like screeches of a circular saw some distance away seemed to him an omen of evil.

The "Plumber" went on his way whistling. He was of a sunny nature, and at last the end seemed in sight. As he neared the low-level bridge, the sound of the pile-driver in her song of progress greeted his ears. Little did he guess that it was her swan-song she was so cheerfully singing down there in the mist.

III

The bridge, slowly creeping forward behind its noisy head, was not the only spot where progress had been made that day. The same sun that dissipated the clinging mist from the river and revealed the bridgers at work lit up another scene of toil in a village some thirty-five miles away — toil less imposing, but no less important in its results. This little deserted village was the "hornet's nest" or lair of one section of the raiders. Nestling on one side of a low hill, and hidden by others slightly higher all round, the spot was well chosen for its purpose. On each side of the principal street straggled houses once white but now blackened and roofless. From a cow-shed at one end there issued the sound of hammering, and now and then the hum of a motor-engine, driven for short bursts at high speed, rose

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to a whine. Tarpaulins clumsily stretched on charred rafters and weighted with stones formed the roof of the shed. Never a savory spot, an odor as of a motor garage now hung about the place, its pungency unpleasantly intensified by the smell of some extinguished acetylene lanterns; for here also they had been working through the night. Men kept passing in and out of the shed — they were erecting machinery out in the yard.

In a room of the village inn, still the best house in the place, four officers had just finished a hasty meal and were pushing back their ammunition-box seats from the packing-case table. One of this group was noticeable: very pale, he carried his arm in a sling, and had been eating clumsily with his left hand. Another was almost as conspicuous. He was a wiry man with a freckled face and red hair, and he wore a hybrid naval uniform. Upon his yachting-cap shone a metal badge representing some insect. The third, the Commandant of the section of raiders, was big and bull-necked, with a sly expression in his protuberant eyes not usually associated with men of his build. All of these men were under middle age, but the fourth was the youngest. He had nothing to distinguish him but pink cheeks and a bread-and-butter face; he was attached to the nautical man only, and did not wear the same uniform.

"We can't spread this map in here," said the senior in a guttural voice, lighting his pipe; "let's go into the next room, or, better, into the tap-room, where there's a bar."

Following him, the party filed in on each side of the long counter, the pewter top of which was thick with dust, pieces of plaster, and broken glass. It was a moment's work to sweep this off and add to the wreckage on the floor. The little run, where some buxom "*patronne*" or "Miss" had formerly reigned, was more than ankle-deep in broken glass and crockery; the shelves behind were bare of their former array of bottles. Behind the shelves, the sharp edges of the slivers of a dusty mirror, radiating outward from one or two points, caught the light in a prismatic sparkle, the brightness of which accentuated the brutal squalor of the room. Even the smell of dust and plaster had not altogether exorcised the established reek of stale tobacco smoke and spilt liquor that still hung about.

"Anyway, I am glad to find you here," said the last speaker. "I heard you were on the way, but many expected things do not arrive these days, and I was not too hopeful. And though I must confess that I am even now a bit skeptical about your box of tricks, I am only too keen to try. Have you unpacked your — what do you call them?— squadron, fleet, covey, swarm?" The speaker had only just returned from an expedition.

"Yes, sir," somewhat stiffly answered the man in the nautical suit. "They've all been unpacked, and my men are rigging them up in a shed we found. I have twelve — the *Gadfly, Wasp, Bee, Mosquito, Tsetse, Ichneum* ——"

"Steady, steady; I haven't time to listen to the whole entomological dictionary. How many will be ready by this evening — for business, I mean?"

"All, I hope."

"Are your anarchists, engineers, chauffeurs, or skippers prepared to proceed on individual forlorn hopes? Mind you, those who do not blow themselves up or get smashed by a fall, but taken prisoner, will almost certainly be shot as spies, and it's odds that good-by at starting will be good-by forever."

"We quite realize all that, sir, and we'll take our chance. 'Tis a forlorn hope, in a way; but the prizes are large. Why, just think; given a chance ——"

"Yes, yes, I know. I see you are a cran — I mean an enthusiast, and quite rightly. Well, I'm going to give you a bellyful of chances!"

The other smiled.

"Now, listen. As you are a newcomer, I'll put you in touch with the position in a few words. Never mind if I tell you something you know already; don't interrupt — listen. See square D 14? That's where their Third Army is, some seventy thousand strong. They're in a good position, holding some villages at a strategic point — the names don't matter. They've been there five days. Our Western force, which is not strong enough to attack, has been hanging on to and harassing them; we cannot make a grand attack, yet we hope to scatter their army and bag much of it. It has marched a long way, fought a lot, and lost nearly all its transport, and it must be starving, quite played out, and very short of ammunition; *and* — this is the point — it has only got one line of rail communication, which is cut! The railway's back along here — see?"

The other nodded.

"Of course, we cut this line when we retired. In fact, I believe, though I'm not entirely in the confidence of Headquarters, that it was arranged for the enemy to advance here. Naturally, they have been doing their best to reopen communication. Being splendid engineers, they've done a lot; but, so far, they have not succeeded, for no trains have gone up, and only a small wagon convoy or two — a mere trifle. The country all round

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for miles is a desert, as far as supplies go,— *we* saw to that,— and they must be in a very bad way. We know from spies that they have been for days on reduced rations, and have many sick; and their guns are not as busy as they were. My duty, like that of the other raiding parties, for the last five days has been to prevent communication being reëstablished on the railway. We've cut the line and telegraph — we captured all their wireless gear — till we are sick. The bridges are very strongly guarded, and all the petty damage we can do is repaired almost at once; unluckily, it is a double line, and they repair one pair of rails from the other. Altogether our efforts are futile. That's the General Idea. Got all that?" He paused to relight his pipe.

His listener nodded silently.

"Good! Now, I don't believe in your new machines flying about vaguely and killing a few men here and there with a bomb, and I think the Chief must agree, as he has sent you here. I believe in attacking some sore spot, and going back to it again and again. The one place where they are vulnerable is at the big broken bridge — here, one hundred and thirty-odd miles from the army. They're working like devils to repair the break, or, rather, to cross the river by a temporary bridge first, and they are doing it much too quickly. They may be through in a day or two, and, if so, their Third Army is saved; but if we can delay the repair for three or four days even, I think it is lost! They know all this, and they've made a regular Port Arthur of the bridge-head. We've tried in vain to get near it, but the whole place is surrounded by outposts, barbed wire, and all that, and they have lit up the bridge till it looks like a gin palace. My sapper officer, who destroyed the bridge originally, spent some hours, night before last, watching them from a hill, and, thanks to their illuminations, saw a lot. He had with him three men carrying dynamite: one blew himself up, two were captured, and he himself was wounded in the arm. Nothing that *walks* can get near the bridge. That's the Special Idea. Got that?"

Again the other nodded.

"Well, that's the place to attack — that's their sore spot; and here you are, O Beelzebub, Prince of Flies, with your horde! Your duty, so long as a single insect remains, will be to fly to that spot every night, and bite or settle or sting or do what you will to delay the work. Remember, if the bridge is delayed for three days, I suspect the Third Army will fall into our mouths like a ripe plum. No food, no ammunition, no horses, they cannot retreat far. Now you have the whole position."

"Yes, quite; but as to the details ——"

"My sapper, here, has a large-scale plan of the place, and knows every inch of it. He will arrange all details with you. He has the very latest information. I'll leave you two; I want some rest."

"Very good, sir."

"Hold on; there is one thing more, and then you will have all my ideas. The aërial attack will be made to-night. Now, how about the news of this reaching the other forces of the enemy?"

"Oh, that seems simple," interposed the youth. "I suppose you'll have every wire cut, and kept cut, so that not a whisper ——"

"I thought so. Not so fast, young fellow. I see you are not yet a psychologist, and do not appreciate the 'Moral Factor' in war," he answered, quite pleased at catching the youngster. "The attack takes place to-night, and, whether it succeeds or not, it will certainly cause consternation and alarm at the bridge. I *want* that consternation and alarm to be transmitted to the starving army; I *want* the news of the blasting of their hopes, or even of a mysterious attack, exaggerated by ignorance of its exact nature, to be the last message they receive. Therefore, from daylight till ten to-morrow morning their wires will not be interfered with; but after that they will be cut, and kept cut, without chance of repair, and we'll stop all messengers, so that after the final bad news there will be mysterious silence. That will give time for the news to rankle, for rumors to breed, and for the doomed army to exercise its power of imagination. The silence will assist. To men in their position a word of discouragement is worth an army corps to us. Afterward, if any machines are left unexpended, we might further assist the hunger-bred fantasies of the poor brutes by flying over them and dropping a bomb or two, or even by flying over them and just showing a light. That's all now. I'll leave you to arrange details. *You*" — turning to the youth — "come along and show what your box of tricks is like." With these words he went out, followed by the youngest officer, who came back for a moment to put his head in at the door and say in a whisper of deep admiration, "Perfect devil, ain't he?"

Then followed a long confabulation between the two engineers over the large-scale plan of the bridge, which showed the information gathered the previous evening.

"How many and what size bombs do you carry?" said the man with the wounded arm.

"Four eight-pounders each."

"Well, that's not much good unless you get a detonation alongside some vital spot. It

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won't do the structure of either bridge itself much harm. Can you drop accurately?"

"If the night is as calm as it is now, we shall be able to drop one bomb out of two on to a patch a little bigger than this room. If the wind rises it is more difficult, because we have to turn up-wind to hover, and the balancing is not so easy. You see, we have to hover anyway to aim, and that's the difficulty. That's what the secret gear and auxiliary-lifting propeller are for — the thing you called the little 'whing-whang,' I mean."

"Quite. Now I know what sort of thing you can do, and this, I think, is the scheme. You see, their rate of work depends absolutely on their pile-driver. If that is destroyed they will have to drive by hand, which will take — oh, five or six times as long. Therefore, that's the sorest point in the sore spot. They're working night and day, partly by the aid of electric light; if that's destroyed, it will hamper them, but they can still carry on the low-level bridge with flares. That's the second sorest point. Agree?" "Beelzebub" nodded. "As they're so deuced near finishing, we must try and make a dead cert. of stopping them to-night, as, once their bridge is done, we cannot really damage it with these little bombs. Therefore, I think you should sail out with all your fleet and do your devilmost to-night."

"Yes; that's sound. I quite agree."

"Take on the pile-driver first, and if you get that, or burst its boiler, switch off on to the dynamo-house. That will be a much easier target: it's bigger. If you get only one bomb to burst inside, even without hitting anything, it will probably wreck the show, for one splinter in the moving parts of the engine or dynamo revolving at high speed will cause the whole thing to fly to bits. Two fair shots ought to do the trick. Can you count on two bull's-eyes out of forty-eight shots?"

"I think so, if there is no wind. Can't we set anything alight? I'm stocking a splendid line in incendiary bombs, pretty things of petrol and celluloid, that look like capsules."

"Nothing. I don't know where their ammunition is, though they must have tons there. Hold on — yes, I saw some mountains of stuff just here; mark it on the map, will you? That is probably forage. After you have done all you can, and expended all your explosive, sail along and drop a few capsules on to these mounds and over the yard. You may set something alight, with any luck. By the way, can you signal to each other?"

"Yes; we carry colored lights and little lamps in our tails. How about finding our way?"

"I was thinking of that. When you get over the hills about eight miles away from the bridge, you will see the glare of it in the sky and can steer straight for it. To assist you before you spot this glare, we'll send out a dozen men who will have lights on poles, shaded so as to shine upwards. Will that do?"

"Excellent. And about a place for landing, in case any of us come back — that's the great difficulty. Have you a pond near here?"

"Yes, about half a mile away; I'll take you to it later."

"That will do. You must put lights to mark the pond, in case it is still dark when we get back, and, if it is deep, have some men with a raft to haul us out."

"Right."

"Beelzebub" went out to coach his men in the details and to finish off the flies. As the other still sat musing, he thought of the feelings of those whose work was going to be so suddenly destroyed, and he felt a sympathy for them.

As the day passed, the number of curious-looking erections drawn up behind the cow-shed increased. Each was supported by a kind of dwarf bicycle and tied down. They were skeletons, with great flat awnings of membranous material and queer shape, stretched taut on light frames stayed with wire. In their spidery appearance they had a remote semblance to reaping-machines. This semblance was borne out by the gaudy fancy of the artist who had painted them, for he had run amuck with his vermilion and blue in a manner usually confined to agricultural machines or toy locomotives. All the metal was painted, and there was none of the bright brass or burnished steel about the machinery that might have been expected. Each had its name painted on it and carried a small silk national flag at one end.

"Good heavens! what gingerbread-looking things!" was the somewhat tactless remark of the officer commanding the raiders, when he first saw them rigged up.

"Shades of Icarus, Lilienthal, Pilcher, and all others! What d'you expect?" retorted the pseudo-naval man, somewhat nettled. "D'you want traction-engines or the winged bulls of Assur-bani-pal?"

It took the foxy one at least five minutes to smooth matters over, and he had to suffer a long technical lecture before he succeeded.

An hour and a half before the moon went down, the first fly made a start down the sloping road. She was the "flagship," and was manned by the "admiral." He was seated in his machine, held up by four men.

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"All aboard!" he said. "All clear, you?"
"Ay, ay, sir."
"Cast off."

With that the assistants gave the machine a running shove forward, the skipper pedaled, the motor snorted, and the propeller began to revolve. Faster, faster spun the blades as the clumsy machine gained way, until the propeller was nothing but a halo, whose loud hum almost drowned the throbbing of the motor. The Thing buzzed down the street like a cockchafer, and, when clear of the houses, soared away steadily into the moonlight, shedding its wheels like the skin of a chrysalis. This was repeated successfully eleven times; but when the last machine, manned by the pink-cheeked second officer, should have left its wheels and sailed away into the night, there was a flash, and a violent detonation shook the houses. Fragments rattled back among those watching two hundred yards away.

"There go the bravest men I've ever met," remarked the chief of raiders. As he reached the hole blown in the road, he added, "Poor little chap!" and his voice was even a little more guttural than usual.

IV

It was nearly four in the morning, and all was well, when the "Plumber," reaching his post on the bridge once again, made himself snug on a plank resting upon two sacks of fish-bolts. The pile-driver was still thudding monotonously, the steam and the flare-lights still roared, and the water lapped against the timbers, while the mouth-organ whined a hymn-tune a short distance back.

A sudden hiss, and — splash! into the river, not a pile's length away, fell something. All but simultaneously, a column of spray shot up, with the muffled report of an explosion under water, and, falling backward, revealed a heaving blister of mud, just visible through the mist. The men who were playing dropped their cards and sat up. The whine of the mouth-organ froze in the middle of a bar. But the pile-driver continued its blows, for the fat man still mechanically jerked the string, though his eyes were all but starting out of his head. Silent, stupefied surprise held all.

The mud fountain had barely subsided when — a second hiss and splash close alongside the bridge, and another subaqueous explosion followed, with its geyser of mud and water, which, as it fell on the track, would have washed the dazed fat man away but for the string to which he clung. At last the pile-driver stopped. Barely had the soused soldiers got their breath after this douche when they were shaken by a racking detonation, accompanied by the sound of rending timber, some thirty yards back along the trestles. The air hummed with fragments, and near the end of the structure every one lay prostrated by the blast of this shock. Still another detonation followed, this time right among the men, as the bomb struck a sack of bolts. Bodies were thrown right and left amid a volley of bolts, which shrieked as they spun through the air, dealing death all around. It was worse than any shrapnel shell, for these missiles were heavy and jagged as pot-leg, and the force behind them was terrific. The boiler was pierced by one. It burst with a deep roar, capsized the truck, and the whole machine toppled over into the swirl below, but not before the cloud of steam, gushing out, had scalded the maimed and helpless men close by. To add to the horror, the wrought-iron reservoir of the flare-light was torn, and the flaming oil poured out over the timbers into the water, and spread in a blazing film, momentarily lighting up the inferno, before it was swept downstream. The cries of the mangled were loud.

After a minute's respite, a faint crash sounded overhead, succeeded by a burst of yellow light, and two flaming masses fell spinning in a sickening spiral, plumb on to the girder-bridge above, where their flight ended in a volley of explosions against the iron. Again the sound of flying metal filled the air, and other detonations followed in quick succession.

This sudden cataclysm was too much. Men born of women could stand no more. Discipline was lost, and from the river-bed a general wail arose. Those who, day and night, had toiled like slaves, dropped their tools, their work, and fled off the bridges toward shore.

A bouquet of dazzling red stars now burst out on high, with a soft liquid report, and slowly floated to earth. In the crimson glow the panic-stricken fugitives paused in terror. What was coming next?

There was not much time to doubt, for a succession of detonations round the corrugated-iron dynamo-shed showed where the attack was falling. These ended in one report with a metallic ring, for which there was no flash, and the electric light went out as a grinding crash sounded from the shed. A second shower of red stars slowly sank to earth. Then, with many little explosions, fires sprang up in the "yard" by the station. Most of them soon burned out without doing damage, but the stacks of forage had been touched, and burst into a blaze. As the dense clouds of smoke and long tongues of flame mounted up, from overhead

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a shower of magnesium stars were wafted gently downward. In their intense light, the flying-machines circling round were visible to all those above the mist. The work of destruction ceased.

Rifle shots rang out, close by at first, then growing into a general fusillade, which became fainter in the distance, like an irregular *feu-de-joie*, toward the farthest outpost line. They marked the course of the angels of destruction, still to be seen in the light of the conflagration. This wild shooting was not quite without result, for two flaming masses were seen to fall — curving toward one of the hills in the north.

As the flames of the burning forage gained strength, and clouds of sparks and a huge volume of lurid smoke rose to the sky — now of the gray hue preceding dawn — the roar and crackle of the conflagration drowned all other sounds.

Against the glowing embers, the half-dressed figure of the consumptive railway traffic officer stood gazing helpless at the scene — the realization of his fears. He was not thinking of his yard, of his friend the "Plumber," or of the horrors around him. He was dreaming of the fate of an army, and of the ultimate results of its destruction.

V

A solitary man stood by a hedge. In his hand was a charred pole, on top of which a light, screened from below, was burning feebly. Close by, a hobbled horse cropped the scant grass. No other sound broke the stillness of the night as the man gazed steadily upward. The moon had sunk and the stars were growing pale in the gray of false dawn, when the horse threw up his head and snorted. The man gave no sign. A moment afterward he heard a faint rustle in the sky as of a flight of geese. Ghostly in the mysterious light, a shape loomed up overhead and swept past on a long slant. This happened seven times, in quick succession. To the weary eyes of the watcher, the shapes seemed to be traveling in long swoops — now up, now down — and slower than when they had passed him on their outward journey.

For the others that he had seen go out he waited,— waited till the hills to the east stood out purple against the blushing sky,— but waited in vain.

HILLTOP SONG

BY

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

WHEN the lights come out in the cottages
Along the shores at eve,
And across the darkening water
The last pale colors leave;

And up from the rock-ridged pasture slopes
The sheep-bell tinklings steal,
And the folds are shut, and the shepherds
Turn to their quiet meal;

And even here, on the unfenced height,
No journeying wind goes by,
But the earth-sweet smells and the home-sweet sounds
Mount, like prayer, to the sky:

Then from the door of my opened heart
Old blindness and pride are driven,
Till I know how high is the humble,
The dear earth how close to heaven.

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A TASK APPOINTED

BY

PERCEVAL GIBBON

AUTHOR OF "VROUW GROBELAAR AND HER LEADING CASES," "THE MARTYRDOM LOTTERY," ETC.

ILLUSTRATION BY WALTER JACK DUNCAN

AMONG the acquaintances of Mr. Lucas there were perhaps a dozen who knew that he spoke Spanish. The rest never guessed it; it was the last accomplishment one would have attributed to that carefully restricted personality. He was a blithe elderly man, clean-shaven and pink in the face; and in his bearing and the plain, decent fashion of his clothes there was a touch of countrified smartness. He looked like a man with an eye for good land, and a tolerable judge of a horse. It was not carried to an extreme; it did not go so far as to make him seem out of place in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he practised as a solicitor of the highly confidential sort.

The cabmen against the railings knew him, and liked the look of him as he passed them on the pavement, glancing with mild criticism at their horses; they saw in him a gentleman after their own hearts, one who never failed to lift a forefinger to his hat-brim in answer to their salutations. And, since the London cabman is a country gentleman mislaid, this was a tribute to Mr. Lucas' success in life. His knowledge of Spanish, and his fine proficiency in that cordial speech, he reserved for those of his professional affairs that called for it; he was careful that it should not appear among his characteristics.

But when, one June morning, his secretary entered his office and laid before him certain papers, Mr. Lucas was aware that the time had come for Spanish. He frowned slightly as he drew the papers toward him.

"You have looked at these?" he asked.

"Yes, sir." The secretary was a young man with a human as well as a professional interest in the affairs of his fellow creatures, and he spoke with a trace of eagerness. "There is a report from Madrid which — well, it looks as if the man had been found."

Mr. Lucas ran his eyes over the report in question — half a dozen sheets of thin foreign paper covered with delicate handwriting. As he read his frown deepened. The tall young secretary watched him in silence till he laid the sheets down.

"I see," said Mr. Lucas reflectively.

"The fellow seems rather a bad lot, I'm afraid, sir," suggested the secretary.

"Yes," agreed Mr. Lucas slowly. "Yes. But, none the less,"— he looked up with a manner as of challenge,—"none the less, Mr. Worthington, the fellow seems to be Lord Morven."

The secretary shrugged his shoulders, and sat down at the other side of the table as Mr. Lucas began again to study the report of his Madrid correspondent.

It was an old affair that was drawing to a close under his hands, and it held the key to his mastery of Spanish. The family of Morven, whose title deeds were stored in the black tin boxes in his strong-room, had derived fully one half of its blood from Spain ever since its founder had come back from the South with a Spanish bride. It was one of those families whose character is expressed in its destiny, whose tragedies are scandalous and obscure. For nearly forty years it had been one of the chief concerns of Mr. Lucas to guide its men, if not along the paths of righteousness, at least along the way of silence; and, ever since the last Lord Morven had died of drink some ten years before, he had been seeking throughout Europe for traces of his younger brother, the heir. The report now in his hands announced the discovery of the son of that brother in the prison at Madrid.

Mr. Lucas finished reading the letter through for the second time, and shuffled the other papers aside impatiently. He caught Mr. Worthington's eye.

"I must go down to see Lady Morven, of course," he said.

"Yes, sir," agreed the secretary.

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"Wire that I'm coming," said Mr. Lucas. "I'll take the first train after two o'clock." He frowned again. "This will mean going out to Madrid," he added gloomily; "that's what it'll mean, in the end." His lips shaped themselves for an ejaculation, but he caught it before it was uttered. The secretary dutifully looked away.

Yet it is to be recorded that when Mr. Lucas, having caught the first train after two o'clock, came forth from the little Kentish station to the waiting carriage, he allowed no hint of his preoccupation to be seen. It was a brisk day of sun; the land was vivid with green; the roads ran white and hard between the high hedge-rows. Mr. Lucas sat back in his seat and let his eyes travel slowly over the gradual landscape, where the young crops were beginning to foretell the harvest. He saw it all with warm relish; it stood to him for the best in life. The feverish vicissitudes of the Morvens, the tropical quality of their fortunes, rested on a lower plane; and it was with a sigh that he looked up when the gates of Morven Park stood across the way and the carriage swept through them to the great door of the house.

It was a house of shadows. Perpetual gloom abode within it and made its atmosphere. From the wide hall Mr. Lucas was ushered at once to a high-ceilinged, sunless chamber where Lady Morven awaited him. The servant shut the door noiselessly behind him, and the old lady bent gravely in acknowledgment of his bow.

"It was necessary that I should see you, Lady Morven," said Mr. Lucas formally. "I trust I am not interrupting your arrangements?"

"No," she answered.

Her voice was softly sonorous, musical with the tones of her mother tongue. In her chair beside the hearth, she sat upright and straight-backed, her head and shoulders shrouded in a black mantilla. The oval of her face, with its olive eyes, looked out from it with an impassivity like the heedless calm of the dead; she was like a monument to burnt-out passions and old sorrows. Over the mantel, a great ebony cross carried an ivory Christ; like ivory, too, was her delicate pallor and the smoothness of her long, beautiful hands, which lay idle in her lap. In such a quietude she had grown old and outlived all but the bare memory of her cordial youth, when her marriage with a Morven had added another pungency to the chronicle of that house.

Mr. Lucas had a black bag with him; from it he produced neatly docketed papers and sorted them in order upon the table. Then he drew forward a chair and seated himself.

"There is news," he said succinctly.

The pale austerity of Lady Morven's face was unmoved; only her hands clasped themselves for an instant and then slackened again.

"News," repeated Mr. Lucas in his matter-of-fact way. "Whether it is good or bad I find it hard to decide. I hope the value of it will be clearer to your ladyship."

He looked across at her with pursed lips. Save that she met his eyes, she gave no sign of attention. But Mr. Lucas' life was punctuated with such interviews, and he went on calmly.

"My Madrid correspondent," he continued, "writes me that he has found, not your ladyship's son, but a grandson. However, I will read you his report at length."

He shifted in his chair to let the light fall on the papers, crossed his legs, and began to read the elaborate Spanish letter. As he did so, his face changed. There came out lines that hardened it; the mild eyes narrowed shrewdly; a certain expression, not known to Mr. Lucas' friends in London, governed and rather coarsened the whole countenance — so well did Mr. Lucas know Spanish. Lady Morven neither moved nor spoke; only when the document described the verification of her son's death and the finding and identification of his grave, she glanced up once at the crucifix. Then followed the account of his marriage, twenty-five years before, with a girl suspected of being a gypsy; then a terse biography of his only child — hanger-on at a bull-ring, lottery tout, and so on.

"A youth of factious tendencies," wrote the Spanish notary, with a discriminating choice of words, "in whom is perpetuated much of the disposition of his parents. His escapades were many, but unworthy of note until early this year, when he permitted himself a part in the assassination of a *ventero*. For this ebullience, he lies now in prison here under a sentence of death; but it is just to note that he was thus sentenced in ignorance of the exalted station which I understand he may now claim. He is twenty years of age, a youth of good stature and of a bold countenance, much blackened by the sun. If measures of intervention on his behalf be contemplated, it is recommended that there be no loss of time."

There was more to similar effect, concluding with the writer's assurance of high regard and a dignified sympathy for a noble house thus enmeshed in embarrassments. Mr. Lucas read it to the last word, and laid the sheets down. He looked across at Lady Morven with a tightening of the lips.

"An exceedingly difficult position," he observed —"exceedingly difficult."

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There was a brief interval of silence. At the end of it, the old lady sighed and let herself sink back in her chair. Her lips moved, and Mr. Lucas leaned forward to catch what she said.

"A bold countenance, much blackened by the sun," she was murmuring.

"I have no doubt the description is accurate," said Mr. Lucas, with a tinge of impatience. "No doubt the young gentleman is, in every essential, a Spaniard. The report suggests it. Even his — er"— he referred hastily to the letter for the word —"even his ebullience is in keeping with it. But the position is none the less one of extraordinary difficulty."

Lady Morven sat up again. "There is, then, little time to spare?" she demanded.

"Very little," granted Mr. Lucas. "It is your ladyship's wish that I should ——"

He stopped short, for the old woman opposite to him was staring at him with a sudden arrogant fixity. The smooth, ivory mask of her face showed color, a hectic tinge on each cheek. The cold ashes of the woman's soul had kindled. For a space of seconds her eyes held him; when she spoke, it was in a voice full of harsh contempt.

"It is my wish that you should not talk," she said very clearly. "It is plain what you have to do." A pause, and her hot stare grew in intensity. "You have the garrote in mind, and a Lord Morven strangling to death before the crowd! You are to see that there is no such spectacle."

Mr. Lucas bowed obediently, his pink face pinker with certain emotions.

"I have my instructions, then," he said, and began forthwith to gather his papers together. "It will cost —" he was going on, when Lady Morven interrupted him again.

"There is no such thing as cost," she said in a clear voice. "It is a good bargain, whatever it costs."

Mr. Lucas bowed again. He understood entirely. In fact, his comprehension was a part of that talent which furnished him with his facility in Spanish. He made the urgency of the business his excuse for not stopping to eat, and was driven back to the station through sunlight slanting richly from the west, while all about him the loaded lands breathed fragrance.

A stout farmer passing in a gig gave him greeting, and he responded urbanely. But in his mind was anger and resentment that the main path of his life should lie so far from all this serene domesticated nature. There dwelt with him yet the figure of old Lady Morven, fragile and still, holding in loneliness her grim attitude of rigidity, motionless through the hours, save for those uneasy glances aside at the crucifix; and his thoughts were touched with angry weariness as he realized that his work in the world was to watch, to know, to understand, and to serve such as she.

None of that weariness, however, colored his activities. Mr. Lucas understood the art of brisk civilized travel, and Lady Morven herself would have been content with the expedition with which he removed himself to Spain. His Madrid correspondent, the notary of the report, one Señor Borrego, met him at the station at Madrid, with an obvious reverence for his sober, prosperous personality. Señor Borrego was a plump, swarthy little man, who gave himself much trouble to suppress beneath a manner of grave dignity a natural tendency to vivacity. He drove with Mr. Lucas to his hotel in order to take counsel with him at once.

"Ah, Señor," said the little man, as the carriage jolted over the cobbles, "if only one had known sooner! If only one had known before the trial! The affair would then have been arranged so well."

Mr. Lucas was looking out of the window, watching the sparse traffic of the pavement. He nodded absently.

"But now," pursued the notary, "who can say? It appears that there were others in this murder, a company of *mala gente* who have much perplexed the roads about the city; and, of these, the only one captured is this young man. I have made my inquiries, Señor; I have occupied myself to prepare the way for you; and I fear — I greatly fear — you will experience difficulties."

Mr. Lucas reluctantly withdrew his eyes from the street.

"So long as there is time," he said, "some arrangement can always be made."

The little notary shrugged, and looked Mr. Lucas in the face with an expression of helplessness.

"There are five days," he said.

"Only five days?" Mr. Lucas was stirred at last.

"No more, Señor. And I have done my best. Doubtless you will wish to go to the prison, the Carcel de la Corte, as soon as may be?"

But Mr. Lucas shook his head. "There is nothing to be done there," he decided. "No. This morning I will call on my Ambassador and the British Consul; and this afternoon I will make a visit to the Ministry. That can be arranged?"

"Without doubt," replied the notary readily. "I will arrange for you to be received, Señor. And, if you should desire it," he added in a tone of significance, "the manager of your hotel will be able to direct you to your bank."

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"I shall not omit to visit my bank," said Mr. Lucas. They looked at each other, and the notary nodded. There was perfect understanding. Mr. Lucas needed no instruction as to the use of money in such an affair as this.

Señor Borrego had by no means exaggerated the difficulty of the task that Mr. Lucas had undertaken. The case had received publicity; the gang with which the young man had been implicated had much afflicted the roads north of Madrid, and in Spain the roads are still the chief means of travel. A captain of the Guardia Civile had earned distinction by his capture. There was eagerness to see him made an end of that no Ministry could afford to despise. At the Embassy, in a carefully informal conversation, these facts were impressed on Mr. Lucas. His audience at the Ministry did nothing to lighten them. He was shown through the parquet-floored outer offices, where the drowsy clerks maintained their endless aimless conversations, to that inner bureau where dwelt the official power, and found himself face to face, across a rosewood table, with a big, bland man who welcomed him with a smile. Mr. Lucas did not like the smile; it seemed to know and to discount his mission. To meet it, he put on a profound gravity.

"Give yourself the trouble to be seated," begged the Minister. "The day is hot, Señor, and you cause yourself unnecessary fatigue."

His big, smooth face was suave and courteous, but the words had an undertone of meaning that Mr. Lucas did not fail to notice.

"I hope not, your Excellency," he answered.

He helped himself to a cigar from the box that was pushed across to him, then reached for the taper to light it. The Minister was watching him with faint amusement.

Mr. Lucas sat up.

"Let me help your Excellency to a light," he said. He drew from his pocket a packet of paper bound with an elastic band, and slipped from it a piece of stiff colored paper, which he twisted into a spill. The Minister, watching him, half raised a hand in protest; but Mr. Lucas lighted it imperturbably and passed it across. The Minister took it and lit his cigar; then, still smiling, let it burn down to his fingers before he dropped it in the ash-tray. But he had not failed to see the figures on it, and the look he turned on Mr. Lucas was touched with deference. The rest of the bank-notes still lay on the table where Mr. Lucas had laid them — a plump bundle that drew the eye.

"I will not detain your Excellency longer than I must," said Mr. Lucas. "I come, then, in the affair of the young man who is sentenced to death. My friend Señor Borrego has, I believe, communicated the facts concerning that young gentleman."

The Minister bowed. "I was deeply distressed," he said in a rich, throaty murmur. "The more so, since I was powerless."

Mr. Lucas scanned him sharply. The Minister was smoking serenely, his heavy-lidded eyes half closed. His large face, shiny with heat, was empty and amiable. Mr. Lucas was conscious of a sudden sinking of the heart. He knew his Spaniard completely, and was aware of that streak of stoicism which differentiates him from the northern European. This man had already been approached by Borrego, who would not have failed to use all the arguments that could be expected to move him. Mr. Lucas knew that, once he had decided that it was not possible to earn his bribe, that he could not reach for the lavish money to be provided, he would speak and look in no other manner than that in which the Minister was now speaking and looking.

"I am encouraged to hope that there is yet time for consideration," said Mr. Lucas.

He leaned forward to drop the ash from his cigar into the ash-tray, and as he did so his arm touched the bundle of bank-notes and pushed it half-way across the table. The Minister opened his eyes wide for a moment.

"Señor," he said, "I beg you to believe that I have given to this matter the most earnest thought. Its aspects have been studied. I have even delayed a decision, in the hope that I might receive representations from the Ambassador of your country. But there have been none. Possibly, however, you can tell me that such representations will be forthcoming?"

He waited for Mr. Lucas' reply with a glance of sleepy good humor. When none came, he settled once more into his chair.

"Thus," he went on, "there is nothing that removes the case of this young man from the category in which it was placed by the prosecution. And, further, I will not deny that public opinion is much engaged in the matter."

He put out a fat hand and took up the bundle of bank-notes.

"These cigar lights are expensive, Señor," he said blandly. "You will lose them if you are not careful."

Mr. Lucas took them with grave thanks and put them in his pocket.

It was a bad beginning; it reduced the available days to four, and nothing had been done. Worse still, there was little left to do. There was in progress one of the constant political crises of Spain, and this added itself to Mr.

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Lucas' difficulties, since it seemed that the execution of his client was regarded as one of the strong cards of a government pledged to clean the roads. But it was not until three more days had passed that Mr. Lucas found himself face to face with failure. He had worked unwearyingly, with a marvelous adroitness, thrusting himself into quarters where his advent must have appeared strange indeed. Outwardly always the level-headed, insular, responsible lawyer of Lincoln's Inn Fields, gray-clad, black-hatted, English to his finger-tips, he made his way to ears difficult of access; he established himself — and that at a moment's notice — on the sheltered and confidential side of political society. But at last there came the evening before the day set for that spectacle which he was commissioned to prevent. Mr. Lucas drove home to his hotel in the afternoon with a new expression on his face, something deeper than gravity, more patient than purpose. To Señor Borrego, who was waiting for him, he turned with absent-minded courtesy.

"There is no more to be done," he said, before the other could ask the question. "The thing is hopeless. To-night I will go to the prison and see the young man."

Little Señor Borrego heard the regret in his tone, and lowered his voice to answer.

"Then I will obtain a permit for you. You are weary," he said.

"I have already a permit," returned Mr. Lucas. He smiled a little as he spoke. "In fact, I have everything that I require."

As he turned to move away, Señor Borrego touched his arm to detain him.

"You — you will attend the — er — the function to-morrow?" he asked hesitatingly.

Mr. Lucas considered him for a moment seriously. "No," he answered; "I think not."

It was dark when Mr. Lucas produced his permit at the entrance to the prison. It was not a permit in the regular form, and he was made to wait in an ill-lighted stone-walled room till the governor of the prison could be brought. But he had plenty of time, and he sat very serenely under the eye of the tall, unshaven warder who kept him company till the governor, having read the permit, came hurrying in.

"You wish to see the prisoner named here?" asked the governor. "This place and all in it are yours, Señor."

He bowed profoundly to Mr. Lucas, and brushed some crumbs from the front of his tunic.

"I wish to speak to the prisoner as privately as may be," said Mr. Lucas. "I have messages for him. The permit in your hand makes that clear?"

The Spaniard bowed again; his teeth gleamed white in the lamplight under his mustache as he smiled accommodatingly.

"Abundantly clear, Señor," he said. "Yet, if I may be permitted — this is a young man of strange habits. There will be an armed man within sight, Señor — no more. He will not hear."

"That will do very well," said Mr. Lucas.

"Then, if you will follow me, Señor," suggested the governor, "I will lead you to the prisoner. He is *en capilla*."

Mr. Lucas followed. The way was through a succession of courtyards, linked together by narrow stone-flagged corridors, where their feet rang loudly as they went. The lantern by which they walked shone on walls greasy with filth, on smooth old stones polished by the passage of generations of the violent, the vile, and the unhappy; and in the air was a faint taint, as of sick men near by. Mr. Lucas walked behind the governor in silence, till they turned at last into a passage from the end of which shone lights. They had reached the *capilla*, the chapel, in which those condemned to death spend their last hours. It was only a space cut off at the end of the passage by a grating, within which there was a confusion of lights on a little altar, and, in the shadow to one side, a pallet-bed. Two sentries lounged at their posts, one within by the altar, the other at the door in the grille. On the pallet-bed Mr. Lucas could distinguish the dark outline of some one lying on his elbow.

"Here, then, is the place," said the governor. As he spoke, the form on the bed raised its head, black against the lights, to look. There was a swift abruptness in the movement which Mr. Lucas took note of. The governor ordered the sentry out of the cell, and despatched him and the one outside the door to stand twenty yards up the corridor. He held open the gate for Mr. Lucas with the formality of a man making way for a lady, and his crooked shadow zigzagged up the wall as he moved.

"Should you require them," whispered the governor, with a motion toward the sentries, "you have but to raise your voice."

"I thank you," said Mr. Lucas, and entered.

The gate closed behind him with a jarring crash, and the governor's footfalls echoed flatly as he retired. The man on the bed remained propped on his elbow till the official had passed from sight; then, with quick, jerky movements, he rose and sat on the side of the bed.

"Well?" he demanded; "and what now?"

The candles of the altar shone full on him. He was staring at Mr. Lucas with a hard fixity that recalled irresistibly the harsh gaze

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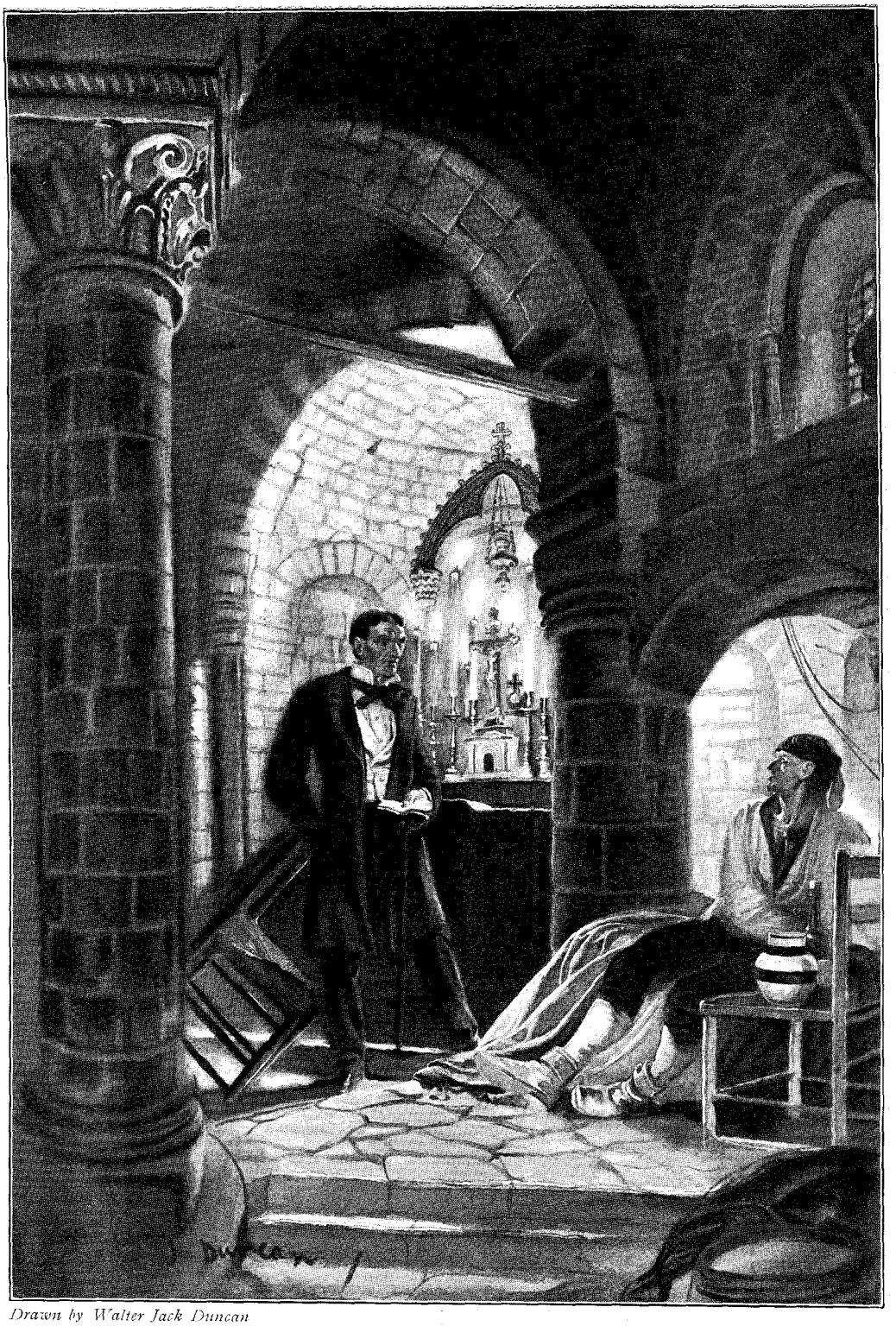

Drawn by Walter Jack Duncan

"'THERE IS NOTHING FURTHER. GO WITH GOD'"

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of old Lady Morven when she had last given him his orders There was more there, besides. The quiet scrutiny of Mr. Lucas took full account of that face, "much blackened by the sun," and something almost like excitement quickened his pulse as he identified one feature after another. The man might have walked into Morven Park and established himself there on the warranty of his face alone. His was the long oval countenance, the narrow predatory nose, the small full mouth ripe for forbidden fruit, the straight, cruel eyebrows. And most wonderfully his, too, was the sum of all those details — the bold, nervous, arrogant manner that characterized and betrayed the Morvens.

Mr. Lucas took it all in before he answered. Had there been another person present to mark it,— Señor Borrego, for example,— he might have seen a change in Mr. Lucas, too. When he replied, there was a peculiar quality of familiarity in his unimpeachable Spanish.

"I come from your family in England," he said. "You have heard of me?"

The youth made a sound of assent, still staring at him. "Old Borrego has been here," he said. "He is an old fool."

But there was expectancy in his tone; his voice had the uncertainty of hope. Mr. Lucas was fumbling in his pockets, as though in idleness. When he spoke, it was as if he mentioned a matter of no importance.

"There is no reprieve, my lord," he remarked.

"Ah!" The youth on the bed breathed hard, and his eyes traveled for an instant beyond Mr. Lucas to the apparatus of the little altar.

"No," went on Mr. Lucas; "there is no reprieve. All that was possible has been done. Money has been spent — your money. But it was impossible."

The lad on the bed sighed. It was like a sigh of relief, as though the removal of a great tension of hope and doubt gave him ease. He fumbled on his pillow, and found and lighted another cigarette, sitting with his chin resting in his hands and his elbows propped on his knees. His dark, desperate face, aged with evil living and hardship, confronted Mr. Lucas.

"So," he said drawlingly, "so I am Lor-rd Morven?"

"That is so," acquiesced Mr. Lucas gravely, still fumbling in his pockets.

The lad seemed to think upon the fact for a while; then he drew his cigarette from his lips and spat in sudden vehemence, with a gross oath.

"And to-morrow," he said,— "to-morrow—"

He broke off. All his hardihood was not equal to realizing what to-morrow would bring.

Mr. Lucas' eyes were narrow; the line of his jaw was, of a sudden, clear and hard as a knife.

"To-morrow," he said, with an intensity of tone that made the youth start, "Lord Morven will make a spectacle for Madrid. When they put the cords on him and bring him out, with a priest whispering in his ear, when the crowd remarks how pale he is, when they bear him backwards till he falls into the chair, when they swing the iron collar about his neck and hide his face with a handkerchief ——"

He paused; his clean-shaven face was cruel. The youth on the bed was swaying to and fro, making little noises like a miserable animal.

"Lord Morven," said Mr. Lucas. "Behold Lord Morven! And yet, there is a way out."

The wretched lad paused in his flurry of agony. "A way out?" he babbled. "A way out?"

Mr. Lucas drew his hand from his pocket and held it to him. There was a white tablet in the palm, like one of those round peppermint sweets that country-folk take with them to church.

"Here it is!" he said. The youth stared at him with open mouth. "It will save all," said Mr. Lucas urgently. "A moment of resolution, and the hangman has no power. Take it, Lord Morven."

The lad recoiled as Mr. Lucas thrust it forward. "No, no!" he cried incoherently.

"Take it, Lord Morven," repeated Mr. Lucas. "Take it!"

There was a long silence. The youth hid his face in his hands, and one of the candles set up a slow sputtering, like the trickling of water. Down the corridor, one of the sentries yawned luxuriously. At last the youth looked up. Under the swart of sunburn on his face was the hue of pallor, but the precarious courage of desperation had come to him.

"Yes," he said thoughtfully, and took the tablet from the outstretched hand of Mr. Lucas.

Mr. Lucas rose and stood before him. He was very formal, very grave.

"I have the honor to salute your lordship," he said. "Has your lordship any further orders for me?"

The youth took the cue. "There is nothing further," he said calmly. "Go with God."

Mr. Lucas watched him lie down again in the shadow and draw the blanket over him. Then he signed to the sentry to come and let him out. He did not look back at the little *capilla* where the last of the Morvens was paying the debt he owed to his name. The night air at the gate struck fresh on his face, and the turnkey who let him out voiced a fear that there would be rain.

"It will be good for the crops, at any rate," replied Mr. Lucas.

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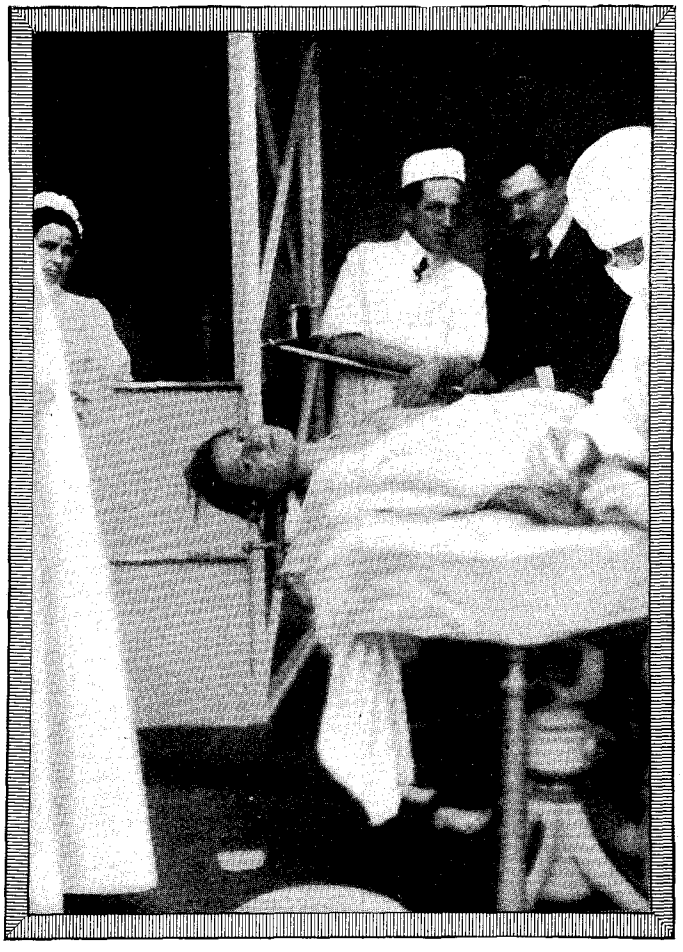

DR. JONNESCO PERFORMING AN OPERATION ON A YOUNG GIRL'S HAND. THE PATIENT IS CONSCIOUS, BUT SUFFERS NO PAIN

THE NEW ANESTHETIC—STOVAINE

BY

BURTON J. HENDRICK

AUTHOR OF "GOVERNOR HUGHES," "WORK AT THE ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

A FEW months ago, a small six-year-old boy was wheeled into the operating theater at the Hospital for the Ruptured and Crippled, in New York City. He was one of the several thousand children of the tenements who annually find their way into this great philanthropic institution, suffering from what, to the lay mind, seems a hopelessly incurable injury or malformation. This particular patient had a crippled and paralyzed leg; and, to restore its usefulness, it was necessary to cut deeply into the heel, stretch the "Achilles tendon," and make other changes which,

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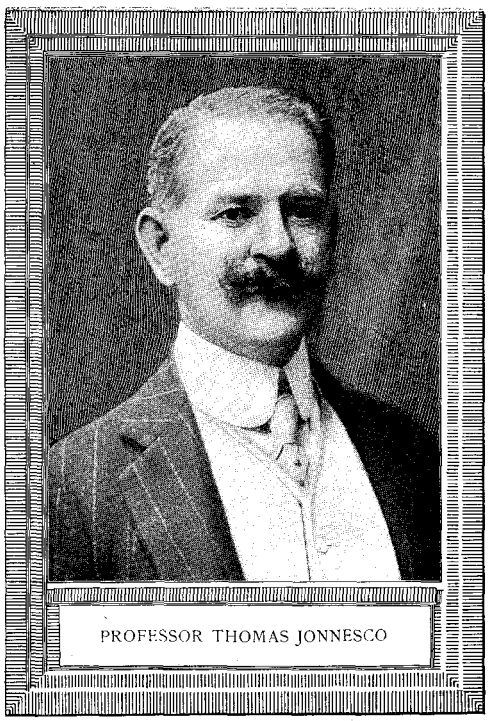
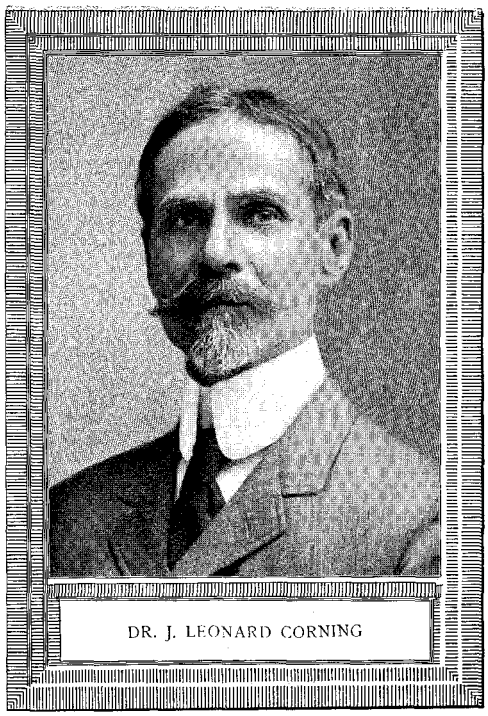


PROFESSOR THOMAS JONNESCO



DR. J. LEONARD CORNING

without the usual anesthetic, would involve excruciating suffering. According to the attendant nurses, the child belonged to the "noisy" class; that is, he was extremely sensitive to pain, screamed at the approach of the surgeon, and could be examined only when forcibly held down.

As the child came into the operating-room he presented an extremely pathetic figure — small, naked, thin, with a closely cropped head of black hair, and a face pinched and blanched with fear. Surrounded by a fair-sized army of big, muscular surgeons and white-clothed nurses, and a gallery filled with a hundred or more of the leading medical men of the metropolis, he certainly seemed a helpless speck of humanity with all the unknown forces of science and modern life arrayed against him. Under ordinary conditions he would have been etherized in an adjoining chamber and brought into the operating-room entirely unconscious. This cripple, however, had been selected as a favorable subject for an interesting experiment in modern surgery, for he was to undergo an extremely tortuous operation in a state of full consciousness.

Among the assembled surgeons was a large-framed, black-mustached and black-haired, quick-moving, gypsy-like Rumanian — Professor Thomas Jonnesco, dean of the Medical Department of the University of Bucharest, and one of the leading men of his profession in Europe. Dr. Jonnesco, who had landed in New York only two days before, had come to the United States with a definite scientific purpose. This was to show American surgeons that the most difficult operations could be performed without pain, without the loss of consciousness, and without the use of the familiar anesthetics, ether or chloroform. Dr. Jonnesco's reputation in itself assured him the fullest opportunity of demonstrating his method in New York, and this six-year-old boy had been selected as an excellent test subject.

Under the gentle assurances of the nurses that "no one was going to hurt" him, the boy assumed a sitting posture on the operating-table, with his feet dangling over the edge. Then, at the request of Dr. Jonnesco, he bent his head forward until it almost touched his breast. This threw the child's back into the desired position,— that of the typical bicycle "scorcher,"— making each particular vertebra stand out sharply under the tightly drawn skin. Dr. Jonnesco quickly ran his finger along the protuberances, and finally selected the space between the twelfth dorsal and the first lumbar vertebrae — in other words, the space just above the small of the back. He then took an ordinary hypodermic needle, and slowly pushed it through the skin and tissues until it entered the small opening between the lower and upper vertebrae, not stopping until it reached the open space just this side of the spinal cord.

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As the needle pierced the flesh, the little patient gave a sharp cry — the only sign of discomfiture displayed during the entire operation. When the hollow needle reached its destination, a few drops of a colorless liquid spurted out — the famous cerebro-spinal fluid, the substance which, like a water-jacket, envelops the brain and the spinal cord. Into this same place Dr. Jonnesco now introduced an ordinary surgical syringe, which he had previously filled with a pale yellowish liquid,— the much-famed stovaine,— and slowly emptied its contents into the region that immediately surrounds the spinal cord.

Complex Operation Painlessly Performed

For a few minutes the child retained his sitting posture as if nothing extraordinary had happened. Dr. Jonnesco patted him on the back and said a few pleasant words in French, while the nurses and assistants chatted amiably in English.

"How do you feel now?" the attending surgeon asked, after the lapse of three or four minutes.

"All right," replied the boy, animatedly, "'cept that my legs feel like they was going to sleep."

The nurses now laid the patient down upon his back, throwing a handkerchief over his eyes, so that he could not himself witness the subsequent proceedings. There was, naturally, much holding of breath as Dr. Virgil P. Gibney, the operating surgeon, raised his knife and quickly made a deep incision in the heel of this perfectly conscious patient. From the child, however, there was not the slightest evidence of sensation.

"Didn't you feel anything, my boy?" asked Dr. Gibney, pausing.

"No, I don't feel nothin'," came the response from under the handkerchief.

An operation lasting nearly half an hour ensued. The deepest tissues of the heel were cut, the tendons were stretched, the incision was sewed up, all apparently without the patient's knowledge.

Soon after Dr. Gibney began the operation, three other patients were brought in — a girl of twelve with a club-foot, a boy of thirteen with a double hernia, and a woman of thirty-six with a dislocated hip. All, perfectly conscious, underwent difficult operations entirely without pain.

No Disagreeable After Effects

Those familiar with the usual operation under ether or chloroform might have concluded, from the simplicity of this procedure under stovaine, that a new era in surgery had arrived. That nauseous impregnation of the atmosphere with the fumes of ether or chloroform was happily absent. The services of the industrious anesthetist were dispensed with. Any one who has seen an average child anesthetized, with the accompanying choking, struggling, and screaming, would have regarded the slight pain caused by the injecting-needle as a small price to pay for the elimination of that preliminary discomfort. There were also few marked signs of the other frequent accompaniments of etherization — the labored, stertorous breathing, the blue pallor of the face, and the not unusual nausea and vomiting. The patients lay calmly, entirely conscious, and evidently undergoing no discomfort.

Stovaine manifested its most marked advantage over the prevailing anesthetics, however, in its after effects. As is well known, it frequently takes etherized or chloroformed patients several hours to recover from the drugs. During this time they are not only exceedingly miserable themselves, but are the cause of much discomfort and anxiety to their friends. They behave much like alcoholics recovering from a prolonged debauch. They are often violent, and this violence may at times become so strenuous as to disturb the results of the operation. But, in the operations described above, the effects of the anesthetic had disappeared in an hour and a half or two hours. There were practically no disagreeable after results — merely the gradual return of sensation to the affected parts. There was only a slight nausea — no drunken hallucinations, no delirium. A couple of hours after his operation, the six-year-old boy described above was sitting up in bed whistling and in other ways manifesting his return to youthful normality.

Spinal Anesthesia an American Discovery

It must not be assumed from the foregoing that this eminent Rumanian surgeon has discovered any new form of anesthesia. He himself makes no such radical claim. All that he has done has been to make certain improvements upon a procedure that is about twenty-five years old. With the idea of spinal anesthesia — that is, the producing of insensibility to pain by bringing a drug directly into contact with the spinal cord — modern surgery has long been familiar. And this idea, like the idea of anesthesia in general, originated on this side of the Atlantic. Probably America's greatest contribution to medical science is this far-reaching gift of painless surgery. The very word itself, anesthesia, is of American origin,

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having been borrowed from the Greek by Oliver Wendell Holmes, in 1846, to describe the condition of insensibility produced by the inhalation of sulphuric ether. The use of this beneficent vapor in surgical operations to-day is essentially the same as that introduced sixty-five years ago by Dr. Charles Jackson and Dr. W. T. G. Morton of Boston. Before their time, the idea that surgery could be performed painlessly had occasionally arisen in men's minds, but had gained little foothold.

"The escape from pain in surgical operations," wrote the celebrated Velpeau in 1839, "is a chimaera which it is idle to follow up today. Knife and pain in surgery are two words which are always inseparable in the minds of patients, and this necessary association must be conceded."

In those days, the only anesthetic given for the amputation of a leg, or the excision of a cancer, was, for the devout, a prayer by the neighborhood clergyman, and, for the more worldly, a preliminary drink of whisky or Jamaica rum — with, perhaps, when the pain became excessive, a bullet or a nail to bite upon. Five years after Velpeau wrote his despairing words, however, Horace Wells, a dentist of Hartford, Connecticut, began extracting teeth from patients who had been anesthetized by nitrous oxid gas, and in 1846 Europe was electrified by the news that, in the Massachusetts Hospital at Boston, several elaborate surgical operations had been painlessly performed upon patients who had been rendered unconscious by inhaling sulphuric ether. Within a few months practically the whole medical profession in Europe had adopted this simple procedure. A year later James Y. Simpson, an eminent Scottish surgeon, announced the anesthetic properties of chloroform. From that day, up to a comparatively recent time, these two chemicals, ether and chloroform, have been the only substances found generally useful for inducing perfect anesthesia.

We shall understand better the action of stovaine if we examine the effects of these two well-tried anesthetics upon the human body and their manifest shortcomings. Until their discovery, mankind knew that many substances would render the human mind unconscious, but the difficulty was that this unconsciousness invariably resulted in death. The problem was to find something that, while it temporarily interfered with sensibility, did not seriously disorganize certain vital bodily organs, especially the lungs and the heart. If we trace the progress of the ether and the chloroform molecules through the body, we shall see why those products met the two essential requirements. The anesthetic, like the oxygen with which it must be administered, finds its first lodgment in the air-spaces of the lungs. Here, like the oxygen itself, it is taken up by the blood and rapidly disseminated to all parts of the body. It does not appreciably affect the patient until it reaches the center of the whole nervous system — the brain. It has a most voracious affinity for all the nerve-cells — that is, it unites with them and effects the most important temporary changes in their structure.

Now, the brain, with the spinal cord, is, as most people know, the organ that regulates all the functions of the body, whether these functions comprise the composition of an epic poem or the beating of the heart. Each part of the brain has its appointed duties. The upper part, the cerebrum, which fills the larger section of the skull, is the seat of our conscious life. It is we ourselves. It is the part that remembers, that thinks, that loves and hates, that experiences pleasure and suffers pain. Immediately below this is a smaller, darker segment, the cerebellum, which regulates that complicated physical performance known as coördination. When we raise a fork to the mouth, for example, it is the cerebellum that so supervises the operation that the fork actually enters the mouth and not an ear or an eye. When we attempt to clap our hands, it is the little cerebellum, again, that makes the hands really come together. Without this delicate mechanism we could not walk symmetrically or accurately perform the simplest physical movements. Below the cerebellum, and forming the connecting-link between the spinal cord and the brain, is the section that is even more essential to physical life — the medulla oblongata. This is the part of the nervous system that, among other things, controls the mechanism which regulates respiration and the heart-beat. It is the one section of the brain that, in the strictly physical sense, is indispensable to human life.

If the cerebrum be removed, we can still live — that is, our hearts will beat, our lungs will breathe, the processes of digestion and absorption will still go on. We should know nothing about it, of course, for consciousness would be absolutely destroyed; we should be reduced to the intellectual level of vegetables — irremediable idiots. Life, however, in the technical sense, would still be intact. If the cerebellum were taken away, we could also exist, and, in this case, exist consciously; but we should walk like drunken men, and practically have no automatic control over our muscles. But if the

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medulla oblongata were excised, respiration and pulsation would suddenly cease and life would immediately end.

Nature, in accordance with that beautiful economy which she exercises in all her works, has bestowed protective powers upon these several sections of the brain in direct proportion to their indispensability in performing bodily functions. Science maps the several parts of this organ according to what it calls their several degrees of stability — the varying degrees, that is, to which they resist attacks from outside substances. The part that gives way most quickly to extraneous influences is the cerebrum — the seat of consciousness. That consciousness is easily lost is a commonplace fact of our every-day lives. A good knock on the head suffices to make most of us dead to the world. Nature tolerates this easy loss of consciousness because the physical frame can exist without it. The cerebellum, which controls muscular coördination, is rather more necessary to physical existence, and therefore offers greater resistance to outside attacks. But the medulla is the most antagonistic of all — simply because its destruction at once ends life itself. Only the most frightful blow can annihilate it; for the vital forces, when once it is assailed, concentrate all their most powerful energies upon its preservation.

People Who Cannot Take Ether or Chloroform

In the normal person, the ether or chloroform molecules, once started on their passage in the blood-stream, soon reach and saturate all parts of the brain. And they affect its several parts precisely in the order given above. If the patient has a healthy medulla, the anesthetic disturbs it very little or not at all. This indispensable organism remains essentially the same as if no anesthetic had been administered, and the indispensable heart-beat and breathing continue quietly. The cerebellum, likewise, though it does not have the great resistant properties of the medulla, maintains its equilibrium fairly well. But the comparatively non-resistant cerebrum rapidly succumbs. As long as the anesthetic retains its integrity, this section of the brain suspends its operations; the patient loses the sense of his own existence, and consequently feels no pain. It may be something of a shock to learn that the part of us which controls our higher lives is the least resistant to the influences that seek to destroy it, but it is this feebleness that has made possible the alleviation of pain and the progress of modern surgery.

These facts explain the possibility of anesthesia by ether and chloroform, and they also explain certain of their shortcomings. Authorities do not agree as to the extent to which these anesthetics are dangerous. The recently published Encyclopedia of Medicine and Surgery says that, of every 2,286 human beings who take chloroform, one dies; and one out of every 6,020 who take ether. On the other hand, "Keen's Surgery," while giving about the same statistics for chloroform fatalities, places those from ether at only one in 16,000. It is usually people with weak hearts, or sufferers from asthma or some other disease of respiration, who die under general anesthetics. In other words, their vascular and respiratory mechanism does not offer that resistance to the drug that is manifested in people who are normally strong. In the large majority of cases, the medulla fights off the ether or chloroform; when the patient is in a weakened condition, however, it does so less successfully. As the heart action and respiratory apparatus vary in different people, so their behavior under the anesthetic varies. Some patients sleep as quietly as children, with respiration and pulsation virtually undisturbed; others breathe laboriously and give evidences of weakened heart action. Patients with badly diseased kidneys or livers are also unfavorable subjects for general anesthesia.

People addicted to the excessive use of alcohol or to drugs take ether or chloroform badly. Alcohol itself, in sufficient quantities, is an anesthetic, and its constant use tends to render one immune — precisely as the daily inhalation of mild doses of chloroform for a number of years would so accustom the body to the drug that it could not be used to produce surgical unconsciousness. And it is not only confirmed drunkards who make bad subjects, but "high livers," people habituated to the conventional consumption of cocktails and champagne — these also usually give the operator trouble. In the case of many people anesthetics positively cannot be used, and they must either endure the horrors of an operation under full consciousness or die from their affections. With a still larger number, ether or chloroform can be administered only with extreme caution.

Again, science has eagerly investigated new anesthetics in the hope of finding one that might exert some favorable influence against the dangers which it describes under the name of surgical shock. The sudden cutting and the tearing of tissue produce certain physiological effects that not infrequently result in death. The precise changes that take place are exceedingly difficult to define, but the outcome is none the less real. Thus, "death from shock" is not

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infrequently the verdict of a surgical fatality. Now, general narcosis, such as is produced by ether and chloroform, only slightly eliminates these dangers. All it does is simply to abolish the sensation of shock from the consciousness. The nervous reactions reach the brain, only we do not feel them. The resulting destruction, however, is precisely the same as if we did. We die — only we do not know it. It is like anesthetizing the condemned criminal before handing him over to the hangman.

Many Have a Horror of Losing Consciousness

Many people have an indescribable and irresistible dread of losing consciousness. Why some men and women will submit to torture, rather than take a dose of chloroform or ether, is an interesting problem for the psychologist; but such people do exist. All these people, of course, lose consciousness every night, when they go to sleep; but they morbidly shrink from it when produced artificially. And a large number, because of this aversion, postpone operations or absolutely refuse to have them performed.

Of course, we must not assume, from these considerations, that the medical profession is dissatisfied with these famous anesthetics. For nearly seventy years they have saved mankind from incalculable misery, and few believe that any adequate substitute for them will ever be found. In recent years, so many practical improvements have been made in their administration that the great mass of mankind can now take them safely; the fact remains, however, that, in many isolated cases, for the reasons enumerated above, they cannot be used, or can be used only with difficulty. Surgical science is seeking, not something that will replace ether and chloroform, but something that will supplement them. In most cases, the abundantly tested anesthetics will always be used; but for people with weak hearts, poor respiration, degenerated kidneys and livers, and for victims of alcohol or drugs or of an abnormal dread of losing consciousness — cannot something be done for them? Above all, is it not possible to mitigate the almost nameless dread that hovers above every surgical table — the danger of death by shock? Modern surgery will not rest satisfied until it possesses the resources that make every operation both painless and safe.

Discovery of Cocaine

In 1884 Carl Koller, a talented young medical student of Vienna, became deeply interested in a substance that medical science had had in its possession, in one form or another, for more than three hundred years — ever since Pizarro had made his incursion into Peru. In those days, as now, the Peruvians habitually renewed their physical and mental vigor by chewing coca leaves, a product, like the quinine bark, indigenous to their own country. In 1859 a famous German chemist succeeded in isolating from the coca leaves the alkaloids that gave them this stimulating quality, and called the extraction cocaine. Its most useful characteristic, however, remained virtually unknown until Koller's time. In reading some old literature, this observing young man was struck by a remark made twenty years before by another German savant, Professor Scharff — that cocaine, when placed on the tip of the tongue, produced a certain dryness and insensibility. Apparently no one had acted upon this pregnant hint, but Koller at once took a guinea-pig and dropped a little cocaine into its eye. When, a few minutes afterward, he pushed a pin-head against the retina, there was not the slightest indication of sensation. Koller immediately dropped a small portion of the drug into his own eye, and found that he could rub his finger against that organ, roll it around, and irritate it in numerous ways, all without the slightest sensation. No ambitious medical student ever started his career more brilliantly than did this young man, for Koller had virtually discovered a substance for which surgical science had been looking for fifty years — a local anesthetic, something that would render possible painful operations in circumscribed sections of the body, without recourse to all the inconveniences of ether or chloroform.

This discovery of the anesthetic properties of cocaine was one of the medical sensations of the nineteenth century. Nowhere did it stimulate greater interest than in the United States. One of the earliest and most successful experimenters was a young neurologist of New York, Dr. J. Leonard Corning. In the practical uses of cocaine Dr. Corning made many important discoveries. He also clearly perceived its disadvantages. At first the medical world believed that cocaine would supplant ether and chloroform in all operations, but Corning and others soon demonstrated that this was not likely. Its shortcomings are easily explained in a few words.

Theoretically, cocaine is a perfect anesthetic: once placed in affinity with nerves or nerve centers, it quickly destroys all sensation. The difficulty, though, was to bring about this conjunction. Nerves are exceedingly ramified and complex, and if the field of operation is large, it is almost impossible to reach, with the inject-

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ing-needle, all nerves and branches of nerves that may connect it with the brain. One important instance soon convinced Dr. Corning of the futility of this method. A surgeon friend had a patient whose leg required immediate amputation. As the man was an advanced alcoholic, ether or chloroform could not be used, and Dr. Corning was requested to inject cocaine. Up to that time, so radical an operation under the new anesthetic had not been recorded. Dr. Corning made the attempt, however, and with virtually complete success — that is, the leg was almost painlessly removed. Still, the process of anesthetization was prolonged and difficult. Dr. Corning had to inject the needle thirty or forty times, in order to reach and make insensitive the entire operative area. Clearly, such a method, for general use, was out of the question. A simpler way of deadening the nerves must be found, or cocaine would be useful only in surface operations, such as on the eye or throat, to which it seemed chiefly adapted.

Dr. Corning Uses Cocaine in Spinal Anesthesia

It was in studying this problem that Dr. Corning hit upon the original idea that has made his name famous in medical annals. Up to that time, cocaine had been injected in the particular area of the body where the operation was to take place. Why this method was unsatisfactory has already been explained. But there was one point from which the cocaine, once securely lodged, might render large areas absolutely insensible. That was the spinal cord.

Those who write upon the nervous organization usually compare it to a kind of telephone system, of which the nerves themselves are the wires and the brain the "Central." When we wish to express our consciousness in action — to walk, to run, to eat, and so on — this "Central," or the brain, telephones the particular impulse through the motor nerves to the muscles, which immediately respond with the desired act. When an outside influence comes in contact with the body, a sensation, whether agreeable, painful, or simply neutral, immediately speeds toward the brain over these same telephonic nerves. These are two most important functions of the nervous system — to move muscles and to register sensation. If we adopt this general comparison to a telephone system — as we may conveniently do — then we may describe the spinal cord as its *cable*. The ultimate destination of all sensory and the most important motor impulses is the brain, and the nerves carry these impulses into the brain by way of the spinal cord. It is the great trunk line of which they are merely the branches. All along its length, these delicate strands enter this comprehensive structure, which thus tenaciously holds in its grasp the elaborate mechanism which controls sensation and movement. If, by some artificial mechanism, we could cut the wires in this cable, we should end sensation and motion in the particular parts of the body affected. If we should cut it at about the waist-line, then the nerves that strike the cord below this point would cease communicating with the brain, and the parts of the body reached by them — in this case, about everything below the waist — would lose sensation and movement. All the nerves above the section shut off, however, would still communicate with the great cerebral center, and the parts of the body with which they connect would still retain perfect sensibility. Obviously, the nearer we approached the brain in shutting off this communication, the more general would be the anesthesia and paralysis.

Now, Dr. Corning conceived the idea of chemically disconnecting the spinal cord in accordance with the principle just described. He believed that he could do this by subjecting it to the influence of cocaine. The spinal cord and the brain are entirely surrounded by a pale watery fluid; and Dr. Corning imagined that any medicament injected into this fluid, or into the immediate vicinity of the spinal cord, would quickly find its way into that nervous center, and thereby prevent the transmission of sensations to the brain. Instead of painstakingly anesthetizing the particular field of operation, he would stop sensation in the part where the nerves converged.

Not until then had medical science dreamed of introducing a foreign substance into this delicate structure, and had Dr. Corning merely suggested the idea at a meeting of medical men, he unquestionably would have been howled down; but in the quiet of his own laboratory he made his preliminary experiments in the usual way, upon animals. The young dog he selected for his first trial responded almost immediately. He injected a small dose of hydrochlorate of cocaine in the region of its spinal cord, and in five minutes the animal's hind legs began to give marked signs of weakness, scraping aimlessly along the floor. Dr. Corning then applied a strong electric current to the affected members; there was not the slightest sensation. When he fastened the same current to the dog's fore legs, however, the creature howled dismally with pain.

Apparently, Dr. Corning had proved his case. Had he divided the spinal cord with his knife, he could not more completely have prevented

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the nerves of the lower part of the dog's body from sending their sensations to the brain. In four or five hours the animal had completely regained its normality. Encouraged by other successes, Dr. Corning was now emboldened to try the same experiment upon a man. In this case, he injected the cocaine between the eleventh and twelfth dorsal vertebrae—almost the same spot selected by Dr. Jonnesco, the other day, for his first operation in New York. Dr. Corning did not have the hardihood to thrust his needle in as far as the spinal canal, but paused just outside, relying upon the numerous minute veins to take the cocaine to the proper destination. Medical men now believe that the experimenter actually reached the spinal fluid, although he did not intend to, for the results were virtually the same as those now regularly obtained. After ten minutes, this patient exclaimed, precisely as did the six-year-old child the other day at the New York hospital, that his legs were "going to sleep." In another moment Dr. Corning found that he could thrust a needle deeply into the man's legs, or into the soles of the feet, without producing any sensation. Powerful stimulation with an electric battery likewise failed to disturb this profound anesthesia. Yet, above the point of inoculation — that is, above the waist-line — the nerves were normally sensitive.

Dr. Corning called this new method "spinal anesthesia," and thus he not only discovered the thing, but gave it its present name. He published his experiments in the *New York Medical Journal* in October, 1885, and later, in 1894, in his book on "Pain." He urged upon surgeons its practical usefulness in operations, especially those in which, for any one of several reasons, ether and chloroform could not be used. But the idea of injecting a drug like cocaine into the spinal cord seemed too terrifying to find general acceptance; and so, for five years after the publication of Dr. Corning's book, little was heard of spinal anesthesia.

And now followed one of those episodes that have figured so commonly in the history of American medical science. European investigators seem to have developed a well-ingrained habit of "discovering" facts already brought to light on this side of the Atlantic. About the year 1900, a violent controversy arose in European scientific circles concerning priority in a new "discovery" — that cocaine, introduced directly into the spinal canal, would produce anesthesia. In 1899 Professor Bier, a distinguished German surgeon, first announced this important fact; and in 1900 M. Tuffier, a leading medical man in France, gave many practical demonstrations of the same thing. German and French savants immediately began hotly discussing whether Bier or Tuffier was entitled to credit as the real discoverer. The argument did not last long, however, for Dr. Corning's numerous publications in scientific journals immediately disposed of the claims of both men. There is no longer any controversy on this subject; and scientific writers on spinal anesthesia, American and European, almost invariably begin their theses by making full acknowledgment to Dr. Corning.

The Use of Cocaine Abandoned

About 1901, surgeons all over the world enthusiastically adopted the idea as that long-looked-for desideratum, a new anesthetic. Many have used cocaine in sporadic cases ever since. In the main, however, this outburst of scientific enthusiasm soon gave way to acute disappointment. Professor Bier, who was chiefly responsible for the new interest, himself lost faith in it. He used it in many operations without accident; one day, though, as a personal experiment, he took an injection himself. It required nine days for him to recover from its effects. At about the same time, two men, whose spines had been cocainized, died on the operating-table in Paris. Paul Aubourg, a well-known French surgeon, performed an operation, according to the new method, upon a South American suffering from lupus. A few hours after its completion, the patient gave signs of acute suffering, manifesting all the symptoms of meningitis. Soon afterward, M. Reclus, who had tried the new method, denounced it before the Académie de Médecine of Paris, giving a long catalogue of casualties.

The chief objection to cocaine injected intraspinally was its poisonous effect. Its use as a local anesthetic had frequently been deprecated for the same reason. When injected into the spinal cord, it created, in many cases, acute disturbances — headache, nausea, stricture of the muscles of the back and neck, and other even more serious difficulties, and, as a result of M. Reclus' denunciation, spinal anesthesia with cocaine again fell into neglect. Several eminent surgeons still continued to use it with success, but the dangers apparently precluded its general acceptance. That Dr. Corning's discovery was an extremely valuable one, everybody recognized; unless some milder substance than cocaine could be found, however, its practical usefulness seemed necessarily limited. The general cry now was for some such harmless drug, and chemists began an industrious search for it.

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Discovery of Stovaine

In May, 1904, M. Reclus, the same man who, three years before, had so vigorously denounced cocaine, appeared before the French Academy of Medicine to present the discovery of a new substance — stovaine, which, he believed, adequately supplied this need. Ernest Fourneau, a young French chemist, was the man who had won in the race for the new anesthetic. Fourneau attached his own name to his discovery, though in so modest a fashion that it is not easily recognized. He simply translated his name, which means *stove*, into English, and so called his new substance *stovaine*. It would take an immense amount of chemistry to explain precisely what stovaine is. It is not, as many apparently think, a derivative of cocaine; it has absolutely no connection with the substance that, in intraspinal injections, it seems destined to supplant. It is, in chemical language, a synthetic product — something that the chemist, in the quiet of his laboratory, painstakingly puts together from other better-known substances. If you ask this same chemist what stovaine is, he will tell you that it belongs to the "tertiary series of amino-alcohols," and if you are still more curious, he will inform you that stovaine is the hydrochlorate of δ-dimethylamino β-benzoyl pentanol. Its effects, however, are not as difficult to comprehend as its name. In general medical practice, it apparently has most of the valuable properties of cocaine, without its drawbacks. It is as completely anesthetic as cocaine, and as successful in local anesthesia — for use in throat sprays, eye operations, and the like. In this connection, it has one great practical advantage in that its occasional use does not lead to a dreadful habit, as cocaine so frequently does. It produces no exhilarating or stimulating effect, — virtually no sensation at all, — so that the conscientious practitioner can safely prescribe it, without the fear of morally destroying his patients. Experiments have shown that it takes three times as much stovaine as cocaine to kill a guinea-pig; in other words, it is only one third as poisonous. It is also antiseptic, is a heart tonic, and has numerous other technical virtues.

Sense of Touch Retained, but Not the Sense of Pain

And, with this discovery, Dr. Corning's idea of spinal anesthesia sprang into new vogue. Soon the very men who, three years before, had despairingly abandoned the new method, began enthusiastically using it again. Bier tried stovaine in three hundred cases, without one casualty. Tuffier used it with similarly favorable results. Judging from the reports of French and German surgeons, the effects of stovaine seem fairly uniform. The anesthesia manifests itself two or three minutes after injection. When injected in the lumbar region, a prickling sensation — the "going to sleep" described by the patients — starts at about the waist-line, and gradually descends, finally passing off at the extremities.

Sometimes the patient loses all sensibility in the lower part of the body — as if some one had quietly and painlessly taken his legs away. At other times, there is a sense of heaviness — as if a weight had been laid upon them. At still other times, the patient retains the sense of touch, even of cold and heat, though almost never the sense of pain. He can feel the surgeon's hands, his knife, the sponge, and accurately place the region affected, all without the sense of pain. Under stovaine, a man could undergo all the tortures of the Inquisition, know precisely what his tormentors were doing, and yet suffer no physical discomfort. "Do you feel anything?" Dr. Jonnesco once asked a patient. "I can feel some one touching me," he answered. This "touch" was the surgeon's hand exploring the whole abdominal cavity. At other times, even this tactile sense is lost, and the patient has no more knowledge of what is going on than if he were entirely unconscious. "When are you going to begin to operate?" the patient will ask the surgeon, after the lapse of several minutes. He is frequently amazed when informed that the operation is finished. The after effects are also mild, compared with those of cocaine or general anesthetics. In many cases, the patient has been known to get off the table unaided, and walk out of the room. There are headaches only rarely, and little nausea and vomiting. In an hour or two, in most cases, the patient can take food, and his general condition offers an encouraging contrast to that of patients in the same ward getting over the effects of ether or chloroform.

Stovaine Tends to Diminish Shock

An early claim made for spinal anesthesia was that it also decreased the danger of death from shock. Under general anesthesia, as already explained, all the injuries of shock are still present — the impulses, that is, are carried to the brain, and do just as much injury as if we felt them. The physical pain gets there, only the ego knows nothing of it. But when sensation is cut off in the spinal cord, the shock never reaches the brain. There is actually no pain, not even unconscious pain. The spinal cord cannot register sensation; only the sensory

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section of the cerebrum can do that; and, by cutting the telegraph wires farther down, the messages never reach their destination. Dr. Corning has always regarded this as the greatest advantage of his discovery; and many French surgeons, as well as Dr. Jonnesco, believe that the new method does markedly diminish, if it does not altogether eliminate, shock. Others declare that while the operation is under way, and the anesthetic is in complete control, there is certainly no shock, but that after it is finished, and the patient is resting quietly in bed, the lacerated tissues convey their impressions to the sensory centers. It is believed that it will thus require further experiment to decide precisely the bearing of the new method upon surgical shock.

Can It be Used on the Face and Head?

Up to the present time between 40,000 and 50,000 operations have been performed under spinal anesthesia, about 800 of which have ended fatally. The large majority of these have been with cocaine, or derivatives of cocaine — so that this mortality rate, about two per cent, is not a fair measure of the usefulness of the method under stovaine. The fact that most of those selected for spinal anesthesia represented the desperate class upon whom ether or chloroform could not be used must also be taken into consideration in properly estimating this mortality. These operations also represent the early experimental stage — before the delicate technique required had been fully developed. The majority have been performed upon that part of the body below the heart. In the early days several surgeons tried injecting cocaine higher up in the vertebral column, so as to anesthetize the head and face; but this idea had soon to be abandoned. Higher injections were dangerous, for reasons already explained; the drug, if injected too high, might reach the medulla oblongata in large quantities, and end respiration and heart action. The spinal fluid, into which the drug is injected, extends from the base of the spinal column up to and surrounding the brain. If the injection is made in the lower region, and the patient is placed in a recumbent position, very little of the anesthetic will find its way into the medulla. This is true for the same reason that water will not flow uphill. The spinal column is not straight, but curved, and, just as it reaches the neck, it makes a sharp turn forward, or, if one is lying down, upward. By keeping the patient in the proper position, the flow of the fluid upward can still further be guarded against. In some operations, the body must necessarily be placed in such a position that small quantities of the anesthetic may reach the centers of respiration and pulsation, but this will not be in large enough quantities to cause marked disturbances. In order to make possible operations in the arms, the breast, the face, and the head, it is necessary to inject the stovaine so high that it will reach this important region. That is why most surgeons have rejected its use in these cases.

The claim is now put forth by Dr. Thomas Jonnesco that the new drug can be used harmlessly for operations in the upper as well as in the lower regions. To overcome the drug's depressing action on the heart, Dr. Jonnesco adds a small quantity of strychnine. Since October, 1908, Dr. Jonnesco has absolutely abandoned ether and chloroform and used stovaine in all his operations. According to his elaborate statistics, published in the *British Medical Journal*, he has personal records of 1,015 spinal stovainizations, "without a death and without any serious complication either during anesthesia or afterward." He has performed the most complicated operations on the skull, the face, the throat, the thorax, the neck, and the breast. He has used it on people of all ages and of both sexes, from a year-old infant to a seventy-year-old woman. He has found it harmless when used upon people suffering from advanced heart disorders, from diabetes, and from alcoholism, and even upon some critically ill with acute infectious diseases. Evidently, Dr. Jonnesco has submitted his method to every possible test, with results entirely satisfactory to himself. His general belief, based upon his own experience, is that spinal anesthesia, with stovaine or some similarly efficacious drug, "will be the anesthetic method of the future," displacing ether and chloroform in all operations.

Use of Stovaine Probably Limited to Special Cases

American medical men, however, do not accept this conclusion. The prevailing judgment appears to be that spinal anesthesia is an extremely valuable addition to the resources of modern surgery. Jonnesco and others have clearly demonstrated its successful use in the lower part of the body; that it is beautifully effective in these regions is now abundantly clear. For that large number of people who, for reasons already explained, cannot safely take chloroform or ether, stovaine will hereafter be largely used. As for higher injections, though, medical science demands further proof. Dr. Jonnesco's operations on the upper trunk and head, in England and in the United States, were not convincing. They did not fail as

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completely as the newspaper reports would indicate, but several times, in order to finish the operation, it was necessary to fall back upon the old anesthetics, ether and chloroform, which Dr. Jonnesco was discrediting. It is not unlikely that eventually spinal anesthesia may be as useful above the heart as it is now below it, but surgical science will demand further proof before generally using it in these cases.

Physical Pain and Psychical Pain

The fact that the patient remains conscious is both an advantage and a disadvantage. He does not suffer the preliminary discomfort that so many experience in the course of etherization, and he does not have to undergo the process of "sobering up" that usually succeeds it. At times, the surgeon has also found the patient's intelligence useful. This may happen in cases of mistaken diagnosis. A year or two ago, in Paris, the surgeon, after he had made a large incision, discovered that he had made a mistake, and that the operation would require the removal of certain important organs. He could perform no such operation without the patient's consent; so he moved up to the head of the table, explained the situation to the perfectly conscious man, obtained his permission, and quietly went on with his work. Under ordinary conditions, the man would have been taken back to the ward, and interviewed a day or two later, after the effects of the anesthetic had passed away.

Patients who morbidly dread the loss of consciousness, and who in consequence frequently postpone or entirely neglect essential operations, will also find a surcease in stovaine. There are still many people, however, who do not care to assist at their own operations. Some suffer almost as much, nervously, as they would, physically, were no anesthetic used. In demonstrating the force of auto-suggestion, the new method has much interest for the psychologist. As the stovaine is injected the heart-beat increases, and as the operation progresses it usually goes down, thus showing that emotional excitement, and not the drug, causes the accelerated pulsation. In a recent operation for a bone tumor on the head, in the Post-Graduate Hospital in New York, the patient gave such signs of suffering that the observers regarded the use of the anesthetic in his case as a failure; but the next day the sick man informed the surgeon that he had felt no pain whatever, and that his behavior was pure nervousness, caused by the fact that he could feel the surgeon chiseling his skull. A hysterical woman will give a sharp cry when merely touched by the surgeon's hands, and then remain quiescent when the knife goes in — showing again that the suffering is not physical, but psychical. And this consideration itself will probably prevent the supersession of ether and chloroform, even though the present method reaches full perfection. The average human being, about to undergo so severe an ordeal as a surgical operation, will still prefer oblivion, and leave the new anesthetic to the thousands of less fortunate patients for whom the old lethal vapors offer no relief.

THE SOURCE OF SONG

BY

ARTHUR STRINGER

SEE, old and empty is my House of Dream,
Where only walk the restless ghosts of Youth
To whom the world has done its grievous wrong!
Yet in the cobwebbed gloom on some old beam
A rat is gnawing, gnawing with a tooth
As sharp as Sorrow's — and you call it Song!

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THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF THE SERVANT PROBLEM

BY

I. M. RUBINOW AND DANIEL DURANT

THE servant girl is disappearing. From year to year it becomes increasingly difficult to get efficient help; or, if efficient, at the right price; or, if at the right price, for any reasonable time; and, frequently, *any* help, at *any* price, for *any* length of time.

To the middle class this spells tragedy. The rich employ men servants; the poor employ wife servants: but the middle class, neither above social convention nor below it, finds itself confronted by a situation that grows more menacing from day to day. It faces a new Servile War — a revolt none the less terrible because entirely passive and even comic in some of its phases. On one side are ranged a million housewives, fighting for the ordered comfort of a home. On the other side is a ragged army of conscripts, working joylessly, struggling hopelessly, deserting whenever possible, shirking when desertion is impossible.

Naturally, mistress blames maid; and, also naturally, maid blames mistress. Each side regards the question as a personal one, requiring for its solution merely the exercise of a little tact and patience by the other side. This is the more natural because women, being more highly developed on the personal side than men, are always prone to observe social problems from the personal angle, and also because the servant problem does touch our personal life more nearly than most social problems. But at bottom it *is* a social problem; for the great initial difficulty, that of *getting* efficient help, is due entirely to a "tight" labor market; and this, as we shall see, is due to a number of causes that ramify far and wide in the network of modern life — causes universal rather than particular, social rather than personal, involving lord and master no less than mistress and maid, factory no less than home, store and shop no less than kitchen. To locate these causes must be our first business, for cure is impossible without a knowledge of cause; while, on the other hand, the discovery of the true cause is generally followed by the prompt discovery of the true cure.

The servant girl is disappearing. On this point the census figures speak plainly. During the last thirty years, they tell us, the demand for help has doubled,* while the supply has increased only by half — in the last decade only by five per cent. In 1870 there was one servant girl to every eight families, in 1900 only one to every twelve; even in the recent crisis, when the cities were filled with unemployed, the demand still outran the supply. And yet, during the thirty years past, the number of self-supporting women — that is, the actual labor market — has more than trebled. Forty years ago a woman thrown upon her own resources would tend to select housework for a living; in fact, one woman in two did so select. Thirty years ago only every third woman entered domestic service. Ten years ago only one woman in four rapped at the kitchen door. The other three applied — where?

Every one knows: at the shop, the factory, the store.

Why? Ask the average housewife, and you will get a prompt reply. "First," she will say, "social stigma; loss of caste; cap and apron. Second," she will add, "dislike for housework and — I hate to say it — a fondness for the frivolities of life." As formulated by a clever journalist, the answer runs: "The trouble with the servant girl is that she wants an easy job terminated by an easy husband."

This is pat and plausible, but, like most snap judgments, not entirely error-proof. When a girl elects to run a laundry-machine ten hours or stand behind a counter nine hours a day,

* In order to avoid a plague of figures we have compressed the statistics into a note at the end of the article.

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you cannot very well accuse her of fondness for an easy job. As to the second charge: her ambition to own an easy husband is, it must be admitted, obvious, but not unique; it is shared by a large element of the female population in all walks of life. Yet it does not make for a shortage of teachers, stenographers, factory operatives, and shop girls. All these professions are notoriously overcrowded in spite of the wide prevalence of this most antisocial aspiration to marry and have a home. There must, then, be another cause at work.

Loss of Caste Not the Chief Drawback to Domestic Service

The theory that social stigma is the main cause of the defection deserves serious consideration, because it is most widely held and because there is a great element of truth in it. Miss Gail Laughlin, in her interesting report to the Industrial Commission, states it most fairly:

> In other countries social distinctions are more marked than in the United States, and are recognized and accepted. Women coming here from other countries are not deterred from entering domestic service because of social stigma. But American women, accustomed to see other women respected and not regarded by the mass of the people as social inferiors, are not willing to enter an occupation to which social stigma is attached.

That the stigma is an important factor cannot be denied. But its importance may easily be overestimated. We know as a matter of common observation that, where a livelihood is concerned, loss of caste is no real deterrent. Scavengery and street-sweeping, in spite of all stigmata, are chronically overmanned rather than undermanned. Moreover, the assumption that self-respecting Americans have left the degraded field to servile foreigners has no real basis in fact. Were this true, we should expect to find the number of native-born servants decreasing and of foreign-born servants increasing from year to year. But what has actually taken place has been the very reverse of this. During the decade 1890–1900 the number of native white servants had *increased* by 60,000 (from 540,000 to 600,000), while the foreign-born had *decreased* by 45,000 (from 375,000 to 330,000). And this decrease took place in spite of the enormous growth in foreign immigration during that same period. Thousands of foreign girls enter our hospitable land every month. Many of these are without male support and are forced to earn a living for themselves. Owing to their ignorance of the language and customs of the new country, they find most occupations closed to them; but there is one avenue not only wide open but insistent: the piers are literally besieged by middle-class housewives in search of cheap and docile foreign domestics. The newly arrived immigrant is conscripted into domestic service, but she is a conscript who deserts at the first opportunity, often sooner than her American cousin, who is supposed to be so much more sensitive to the stigma involved.

Housework the Most Exacting of Industries

Again, this theory of social stigma seems to imply that domestic service alone, of all the occupations open to women, is so afflicted. But, as a matter of fact, there is a well-established hierarchy of feminine vocations, each with its well-defined social grade: teaching, clerical work, selling, factory work, laundry work, domestic service, farm work, the submerged professions.

Now, social stigma might militate very strongly against a change of occupation involving a fall from the upper rung of the ladder to a lower or the lowest. But, as a rule, the changes do not occur in groups widely separated so much as in those near each other. A teacher may become a stenographer; a saleswoman may become a factory operative; and a factory girl a servant. *In each case there is some loss of caste, but this is not powerful enough to prevent the step, if it is desirable in other respects.* Yet, domestic service is practically the only one to suffer from wide ostracism on the part of the workers. We are driven inevitably to the conclusion that there must be some other powerful cause at work to produce this lamentable scarcity. It is impossible to believe that the ebb and flow of the great tide of human labor, which everywhere else is governed by strict economic law, should here take so capricious a twist merely because of social stigma. This most popular theory breaks down, therefore, in three places: it goes against the facts, against common sense, and against well-established social laws.

But, abandoning all theories for the moment, let us look facts squarely in the face and see what we shall see. The situation, at first glance, is utterly paradoxical. Housework is, by all tradition, woman's work — wholesome, congenial, natural; factory work, on the other hand, is admittedly unwholesome and unnatural. Yet the home, which is in sore need of willing workers, must go a-begging, while industrial establishments, already overcrowded, find a new army of despair besieging their doors every morning. Is this because of some

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perverted instinct on the part of the working-woman that drives her into unnatural occupations? No; for she hates the machine to which she is chained, the counter to which she is shackled. Ask her, haggard and weary at the end of the day's work, whether she would be willing to live that day over again, or any part of it, or any week or month or year. You know what the answer would be. And yet she declines, by the hundreds and thousands, our offers of room and board, leisure, culture, and comfort. Something must be wrong with our bid. Let us compare the demands and the offers of industry with those of the home.

Industry, we know, demands just one quality from its workers, and that is, efficiency. Given a cheap, rapid service, it is practically indifferent to all other qualifications or disqualifications. The factory and the shop want speed, the store a certain neatness and brightness; that is all. But domestic service requires more than mere efficiency — or, rather, efficiency in service implies more.

What the Kitchen Demands

The first quality sought in a servant is loyalty; the second is servility. Bernard Shaw brings this out well in his "Arms and the Man." Louka, the servant girl, becoming somewhat uppish because of a fancied security in the household, based upon her knowledge of some of the family secrets, is cautioned by the elder man servant, Nicola.

NICOLA. You take my advice, and be respectful; and make the mistress feel that no matter what you know or don't know, they can depend on you to hold your tongue and serve the family faithfully. That's what they like; and that's how you'll make most out of them.

LOUKA (*with searching scorn*). You have the soul of a servant, Nicola.

NICOLA (*complacently*). Yes: that's the secret of success in service.

A royal prince may bear the humble motto "Ich Dien"; a haughty noble may subscribe himself, "Your humble, obedient servant": but for the menial these metaphors do not soften one iota the base laws of servitude.

The second demand made by the kitchen is a long and indefinite work day. The average, as ascertained by careful inquiry on the part of the Domestic Reform League, of Boston, is thirteen hours on week days and eight on Sundays. True, the servant is not at work all the time she is on duty, and there is pleasant diversion in marketing; but, on the whole, it means that all her waking hours, her whole life, in fact, is at the beck and call of another. This is the most terrible demand that the kitchen makes, and, as we shall see later, the most powerful cause of desertion. For it means that all that this great civilization of ours has to offer her is Dead Sea fruit. All-impelling is the call of the city to the lonely youth on the farm, but greater still is that same call to the city worker who is in the midst of that life, yet who may not participate. The fullness of personal life is closed to any one who works thirteen hours a day.

Another demand is celibacy. Another is moral conformity. If the servant lives in the intimacy of our home, self-protection compels us to exact of her regular hours, to have a certain control over her social life, and to demand that in other respects she conform to our standard of character and conduct rather than to hers.

Loneliness of the Servant

Of 2,300 girls questioned by the Michigan Bureau of Labor, *only fifty-one* belonged to fraternal societies of any kind. Of 230 girls questioned by the Domestic Reform League, only *twenty* belonged to clubs and only *fifteen* to classes of any sort, while 118, or more than half, had no men callers whatever. Yet the vast majority of these were under thirty and life was calling loudly to them even as to you and me. Moreover, the loneliness of the servant is of the worst type. She is in a family but not of it. Our home deprives her of a home. This may seem grotesque when we consider the great disparity, in comfort and culture, between the home from which she comes and the one in which she serves. But, to quote one girl: "Home is the place where the loved ones live — a place of freedom, with the companionship of equals on equal terms. Home is not the kitchen and back bedroom of a house belonging to another."

There are comfortable folk who argue that all this psychologizing over the feelings of a servant girl is sheer nonsense; that the poor do not feel things in the same degree that educated, sensitive folk do; that they take pain and pleasure on a low plane, like Chinamen and snails. That may be. It is possible that, when a working-girl deliberately escapes what is to her a pain economy and seeks what is to her a pleasure economy, she does it, not on high psychologic grounds, but impulsively and thoughtlessly. That may very well be; yet her action calls our hand. She thereby creates a problem that wiser folk must concern themselves with, willy-nilly. And no possible solution of this problem can be a final solution if it ignore this psychic factor.

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Finally, there *is* the genuine loss of caste. The servant loses her family name, assumes cap and apron, becomes a drudge, a slavey, a thing — "merely Mary Ann." Her chances for marriage are lessened because of the snobbishness in her own circles. A young mechanic, when his fancy turns to thoughts of love, looks up, to the school-teacher, and not down, to the despised housemaid. This is a contributory factor of no slight importance; it cannot be ignored, but it must clearly be recognized as a concomitant or symptom rather than a cause.

So much for the relative demands of industrial and domestic service. It must be admitted that the balance is easily on the side of the former. Now to a comparison of what they have to offer.

What the Factory Offers

The factory hours are regular. Even though the machine break the back, even though life is shortened by many years, yet the end of the day's work spells freedom — to rest, to look around, to plan escape, even to dissipate. But housework — is never done.

The factory provides human fellowship. At work, or during the noon hour, or after work, social life is possible and real. But in the solitude of the kitchen petty irritations may grow and fester. The veriest trifles may there assume the power to obsess the mind, to poison the soul. Every one has observed that the factory worker, sweated and driven though she be, is yet more cheerful than her sister in the kitchen. For who ever saw a cheerful servant girl except on the stage?

The shop and factory offer incentive to promotion. The cards are shuffled oftener. One may become rapidly expert and perhaps earn more. One may specialize in one direction and look for better openings. One may, some day, become "forelady," buyer, manager — who knows?

The factory pays in real money. The weekly wage is not adulterated by a cheerless bedroom, a discarded ball-dress, or leavings from the family dinner. The factory worker gets less, in the long run, than she would in service, but it is in more convertible form. It can be translated directly into units of comfort or happiness or folly, at one's own will or pleasure.

What the Kitchen Offers

First, better wages. The servant can save more than most women workers. Her average money wage is $4.50 a week, or, together with board and lodging, the equivalent of about $400 a year. Since she has no car-fare, few personal expenses, and no social position to keep up, she can probably save $150 a year, which is more than the average school-teacher can do on a salary of $400 or $500 a year, from which must be deducted board and lodging, car-fare, expenses for books and stationery, personal requirements, etc.

Second, there is security of position. Given a fair degree of efficiency and a certain degree of compatibility, her place is practically permanent. There is no slack season to dread.

Third, the life is healthier, offering, as it does, a greater diversity of labor, with many opportunities for outdoor work. But this is to an extent offset by the unsocial character of the work, the poor sleeping accommodations generally provided, and the cramped life of the modern flat, so that, on the whole, the average servant is not much healthier than the average factory or shop girl. Tuberculosis is a housemaids' disease.

Finally, the service provides a certain training for home life that an intelligent girl contemplating marriage can, and often does, utilize. It means, frequently, an atmosphere of refinement and culture that she could never approach otherwise, and, also frequently, personal opportunities for self-education.

Here, then, are the bids that industrial and domestic service make for the girl. Let us tabulate them to get a clearer view:

The Home Demands	*Industry Demands*
Long, irregular hours	Efficiency, *i.e.*,
Sunday and evening work	Speed
Servility	Skill
Loyalty	and (at times)
Celibacy	Neatness
Isolation	
Loss of caste	
Conformity	
Sacrifice of home	

The Home Offers	*Industry Offers*
Good wages	Independence
Steady work	Social life
Room and board	Sundays and
Healthy work	evenings
Training	Incentive
	Home life
	Money wages

The Working-Woman Chooses

An unprejudiced reading of this table should show why the working-woman prefers shop and factory, with all their horrors, to housework. All that goes to make life livable — freedom,

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incentive, sociability — you find on the side of industry, while all that represses and depresses seems to be in the kitchen. It is a ghastly mockery to speak of factory work in such terms, and yet every year hundreds and thousands of women make a deliberate choice of the one as against the other, and on these very grounds. Industry gets the pick of the market: those who are bright, quick, ambitious, go to it; the home gets the "seconds"— the servile or inefficient or penurious. The working-woman weighs the bids, and goes to the bidder *who offers her more of personal life.* The factory sweats her; the trade-union repels her; the machine breaks her: but what is left of her life is all her own; and this remnant, pitifully small though it be, she clings to eagerly.

But why does the home make these peculiar demands? Is it, as is so often charged by reformers, because of selfishness on the part of the mistress — woman's inhumanity to woman? Hardly; for, after all, it is the mistress who suffers most from these periodical upheavals in her kitchen, and we know well enough that even the most flagrant selfishness takes heed when penalized by personal discomfort. There must be something inherently peculiar in the organization of the home itself which compels these peculiar demands.

The Medievalism of the Home

The fact of the matter is that the home of to-day, in spite of all modern improvements, is still, as far as its economic organization is concerned, virtually medieval. To the student of industrial history nothing is more interesting than the evolution of the personal freedom of the laborer. In the Middle Ages *all* labor was in the very same status that domestic labor is in to-day. The workman lived in his master's home; room and board were part of his wages, precisely as with the servant of to-day; his work day was long and irregular; and his whole life was lived in conformity with that of his master. It was a patriarchal relation, and a perfectly reasonable one when we bear in mind the fact that the worker could actually look forward to entering the family of his master through marriage with the daughter of the house.

As industry developed, however, and modern capitalism set in, this relationship was found embarrassing. It clogged the wheels of progress. Therefore it was abandoned in favor of the more impersonal relation that prevails to-day. The employer buys labor power and the worker sells labor power. There the transaction ends. The steel worker in Pittsburg has definitively abandoned all hope of marrying the daughter of the Steel Trust.

Sentimentalists may bewail the change, but it was inevitable. It has its drawbacks, but it also has its advantages, of which personal liberty for the worker outside of working hours is the greatest and most highly prized. For, under modern industrial conditions, the laborer is, during working hours, merely an attachment to a machine. The "joy of labor," which buoys up the skilled handicraftsman or the professional worker, is unknown to the unskilled machine worker whose ten-hour day is spent in deadly repetition of one specialized motion of the hand. *He* must seek his personal life outside the shop. That is why the great industrial battles of modern times rage around the question of hours. To the machine worker one hour less of labor means one precious hour more of life.

In the Middle Ages it was the *person* who was hired; to-day it is his *labor power.* This distinction may seem academic and elusive, yet it has a tremendously important bearing on our problem; for, of all the industries, domestic service alone has retained this patriarchal anachronism, and dearly do we pay for it. Many a store on the lower East Side of New York has a large sign bearing the single word SERVANTS. In this simple fashion does the dealer announce that he trades, not in cigars or groceries, as his neighbors do, but in human beings. It is not *service* that he rents out, but *servants.* Naturally human goods are more troublesome than live stock or furniture. This medieval bone sticks in the throat of modern society. It must out or it will work mischief.

By this time it should be clear that this servant problem *is not a personal problem,*— a mere difficulty between mistress and maid, that can be smoothed away by gentle spiritual applications of tact, forbearance, kindliness, consideration, and all those other homiletic virtues that are so highly praised and never practised, — but rather a big *social* problem, ramifying far and wide in the complex network of modern life. As long as it is regarded as a personal problem, the average maid will blame the mistress, the average mistress will blame the maid, and the average man, when the kitchen barometer reads "Storm," will blame both. All three tend to reach a state of mutual irritation that quite prevents them from seeing the problem as a whole. But, once recognized as a social malady, it should become susceptible to analysis and treatment. Humanity, in its forward march, has solved many a problem greater than this.

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As to Remedies

The crux of the problem is the medievalism of the home. All our clues have led to this point and all our remedies must start from this point. Moreover, these remedies should be not far to seek, for all experience has shown that, once the cause of a disease is located, the remedy is somewhere around the corner. Unfortunately, however, social therapeutics is much more complicated than physiological. When a disease spot sets up in the physical organism, all the vital forces in the body combine in a great effort to cure. In the social body, on the other hand, there is ever present a host of conflicting forces and interests that tend to increase the irritation. Then, too, we have as yet no regularly licensed sociological physicians whose advice we would be willing to follow. This may be due to our lack of faith in their specifics, or perhaps we lack the faith because they lack the licenses. This, however, is beside the mark. Let us examine such remedies as are offered, to see if they will bear the test of application.

Now, of remedies for social ills there seem to be only two kinds: first, those that are popular but terribly unscientific; second, those that are scientific but terribly unpopular. To this rule the servant trouble offers no exception. The popular remedies range all the way from the Golden Rule, education, and bonuses, to fines and penalties, Blue Laws, and hanging.

Why the Golden Rule Will Not Govern the Servant Problem

"Apply the Golden Rule," runs one homily. "Treat your servant as a member of the family, as an equal." To such a call the heart of the sentimentalist goes out most eagerly. He is thrilled by the fine humanism of Whitman's

> He that sweeps the walks and empties the cesspools,
> To him do I give the family kiss and him do I greet as brother.

But should he attempt to put this democracy into practice, he would discover, first, that the servant really does not care for social equality in that sense; she is embarrassed by it and would gladly trade it for an increase in wages. Secondly, he would find that such a policy would be tantamount to inviting an utter stranger into one's home to become one's most intimate friend. Now, this would be beautiful and even possible in Arcadia, but in this matter-of-fact world, with its multitude of distinctions that, though artificial and unjustifiable from a big human standpoint, are nevertheless real and, for the present, ineradicable, would it not be rather stupid to select one's best friends through a fortuitous employment agency? And could *any* friendship stand the test of a twelve-hour day at $4.50 a week?

To remove the stigma by calling the servant "Miss" instead of by her first name, and by abolishing cap and apron, is another favorite remedy. So far, excellent; but in most homes, it is worth remembering, only one servant is employed and the uniform adopted only on ceremonial occasions; and, as between servants and servants, those who wear the uniform are more often proud than ashamed of it. Besides, we have seen that the social stigma is not a cause, but a symptom. To remove the one while leaving the other untouched would, therefore, be as childish as ineffective.

Increased Efficiency Does Not Mean Increased Wages

We have before us the twenty-first annual report of the "London Society for the Improvement and Encouragement of Female Servants, by Annual and Other Awards, No. 110 Hatton Garden (Four Doors from Holborn), 1834." The objects of the society, as stated quaintly in the report, are "Female Domestic Servants Hired by the Year." The aim is "To encourage them to be correct and trustworthy in their conduct, and abide as long as possible in the same service." The report, you will note, is dated 1834,— seventy-five years ago,— but the society, judging from the tone of its plaint, might have been founded yesterday in Boston. The bonuses were tempting enough. A servant who had stayed a whole year in one place was entitled "to a Bible, with an inscription." If she was already the fortunate possessor of a Bible she was entitled to half a guinea—"if," the report adds, with a hint of disapproval, "she prefer it to receiving another Bible." That this method has failed it is hardly necessary to point out, since the problem is almost as acute in England as in America.

The establishment of training-schools has been regarded with favor in many quarters. This seems, at first glance, to offer many possibilities, but a closer examination does not bear them out. The first objection lies in the obvious impossibility of finding candidates to train for a position that is known to be socially undesirable and economically unprofitable. The second objection lies in the lack of inducement offered to trained servants as against untrained. Of 230 housewives who were asked by the Domestic Reform League whether they

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would be willing to pay more if competent help were available, 142 answered with a prompt negative. Of 197 who were asked whether they would be willing to give extra privileges, such as shorter hours or definite free time each day for superior service rendered, 114 answered, "No." We refuse to pay for trained service, that is clear. Why, then, in a practical world like this, expect to get what we refuse to pay for?

Some Tentative Scientific Remedies

All these very popular remedies are impracticable, not from lack of good faith or good will, but simply because they do not offset the competition of the home with the factory. The advocates of certain scientific remedies, on the other hand, recognize frankly the utter and inevitable defeat of the home in this one-sided competition, and simply propose to raise the bid: to offer regular hours, straight money wages, and even an interest in the business in the shape of a limited form of profit-sharing. That such means will prove entirely successful is too much to expect, but, so far as they point the way to an ultimate solution, they are worth recording.

One household of our acquaintance has established an eight-hour day — from 7 to 10 A.M. and from 2 to 7 P.M. — which is apparently working excellently. The servant gets six dollars a week, provides her own food, and lives with her family, several squares distant. Under this arrangement everybody is happy, but it would, of course, be quite impracticable in a household with several children or with considerable social life. It can easily be seen that altogether such a plan involves a high order of executive ability on the part of the mistress and a degree of efficiency on the part of the maid that are not to be found in combination in the ordinary household.

Another home practises a form of profit-sharing. Each week a stipulated sum is set aside for household expenses. Whatever is saved from that is divided equally between mistress and maid. Breakage is deducted from total saving. Thus the servant is offered an incentive to economy and carefulness which, judging by reports to date, is fairly effective. But it is not difficult to imagine a situation in which the innocent husband might fare badly through an excess of economy on the part of the combination.

Another household has an electrically heated contrivance in the dining-room that does away with the necessity of waiting on table, thus insuring privacy for the family and freedom for the servant.

These examples illustrate certain tendencies already at work. They are sound in principle, but so long as they remain isolated individual solutions, they still leave the question where they found it. Individual homes may, by shrewdly adjusting this or that phase of the situation to their particular needs, reach some sort of satisfactory private solution of the universal difficulty. But such favored households may not only fail to solve the problem as a whole, but even aggravate it for those less fortunately situated — just as the rich American tourist with his over-generous tipping notoriously makes travel abroad much harder for his poorer countrymen who can afford only moderate tips. This problem will never be solved by personal applications of copy-book maxims. The individual mistress may be ever so "good" to "her" servant, but it will count for naught in the great sweep of economic law that ordains that labor shall flow most freely where it is freest.

The true solution must be a workable social solution, generally applicable and generally applied. The ills from which society suffers can be cured only by society itself, through collective, regulative action. That this doctrine is unpopular we know full well. It runs counter to most of the current beliefs on the subject, yet nothing has been proved more often and more clearly. To declare, for example, that the passage of an eight-hour law for servant girls would hasten the solution of the problem would seem to be the height of paradox and the depth of nonsense; for, since the present difficulty is due to a scarcity of servants, how would the intensification of that scarcity help matters? And yet it might be demonstrated with almost mathematical certainty.

The Antiquated Machinery of the Kitchen

No age and no country has been so well equipped with efficient labor-saving machinery as ours. Yet the kitchen remains a most primitive institution. Is housework so complex and mysterious an affair that the human mind cannot design mechanical appliances to lighten woman's burden? Of course not. The Patent Office in Washington is even now filled with devices that would reduce all housework to a matter of pushing buttons. Why are these not in use? Because it does not pay to market them. Why not? Because — and this is an important, though open, secret — during all these years there has been a plentiful supply of cheap human labor — mothers, wives, sisters, unappropriated aunts, country girls, im-

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migrant girls, orphan girls, widows, etc., to do all this helot labor by hand. But mark what is happening under our very eyes. The past two decades have opened many new avenues of employment to women, and they have rushed in eagerly — the better educated going into literature, arts, business, and the professions; the less educated into offices, shops, and stores; and the least educated into factory, laundry, and mill. *The diversion of this stream of cheap human labor had an immediate effect in stimulating the demand for kitchen appliances.* Witness the growing number of advertisements for washing-machines, prepared foods, vacuum cleaners, etc. A manufacturer who pays from $200 to $2,000 and more for a single page insertion in a single issue of a periodical knows that there are enough homes that need his commodity to justify this apparent extravagance. And he is right. Every order that he receives is a flag of surrender from some harassed housewife who has been battling single-handed and in vain these many years. And every order that he fills enables him to extend his market, in turn cheapening and perfecting his appliance, this in turn creating a greater demand, and so on in an ever-widening circle, until every household shall be supplied.

The Startling Possibilities of an Eight-Hour Day

The first step in this process of modernizing the home has been taken blindly and even reluctantly. Had any one dared to predict, twenty years ago, that the exit of the servant girl by one door would be followed by the entrance of an army of cleaners and wash-machines through the other door, he would have been laughed into oblivion. But to-day it is almost an accomplished fact. Now, may one dare to predict the consequences of the further limitation of the domestic service corps by the passage of a law forbidding a servant to work more than eight hours a day? Easier to predict the tremendous agitation that would be organized against it — an agitation enforced by all the latent possibilities of wit and caricature centering around such a hyper-ludicrous notion as that the servant girl should quit work at a given hour, exactly like the butcher and baker and candlestick-maker. It would strike the national funny-bone as nothing in the history of crank legislation has yet struck it. And yet — suppose some such law did actually get on the statute-book and came to be enforced, what would actually happen?

At first, probably, a transition period of readjustment that would, in many cases, be maladjustment, as all transition periods are. Then would arise a cry from all over the country for help, for mechanical help. At once, as by magic, the market would be flooded with devices — pot-scrubbers and window-cleaners and dish-washers and contrivances electrical, gasolene, hot air, compressed air, and what not. Then would follow a competition among these various devices for the American home trade that would be something unprecedented in commercial history; for here would be a market not only at our very doors, but literally in our very doors, far more potential for wealth than that of China or India. The struggle would be short, sharp, and decisive. Within a few years the most efficient and best selling would be perfected, cheapened, standardized, trustified. Another decade and the readjustment would be complete: every home would be supplied with a host of contrivances such as even the very rich cannot afford to-day. Central stations would radiate hot water, electricity, compressed air, steam, just as central stations now radiate cold water, gas, and telephone service. Push buttons and bulbs would do the rest. And all at a cost that would seem incredibly low to-day, because then the market would be universal, compact, and steady. With such a market anything is possible.

Does this seem Utopian? Ask the Patent Office for the technical possibilities; ask any large manufacturer for the commercial possibilities; ask any student of industrial history for economic probabilities.

How the Apartment-House is Revolutionizing Domestic Service

But, admitting the present impossibility of legislating on the subject,— an impossibility not inherent in the problem itself, but due merely to an unaroused public opinion,— what are the existing forces and tendencies already working toward a solution? Of individual efforts and their limitations we have already spoken. Conscious social effort, in the sense of State regulation and control, there seems to be none. Of blind economic forces, on the other hand, there are several.

The first and most important of these blind forces is, as we have already seen, this very defection from the ranks of domestic service that we bewail so loudly. For this spells a scarcity of household labor; scarce labor means dear and inefficient labor; dear and inefficient labor spells, inevitably, the introduction of mechanical devices. Nothing can be more certain than this. As the years progress and

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the servant problem becomes more and more acute, we shall be compelled to turn to the great reserve army of machinery even now ready and waiting for the call. The recalcitrant servant girl becomes, then, through the irony of economic fates, an effective, though humble and unconscious, instrument of social progress.

Another force at work to break up the medievalism of the home is the apartment-house, which tends to break the strongest of the medieval bonds — the living in of the servant. The high rentals in the larger cities make the cost of additional room a serious consideration for the average family. In the South, also, there is a growing disinclination to have the negro servant in the house after her work is done. Should this spirit spread,— and there is little doubt that it will,— it will work a quiet revolution in domestic service. For, so long as the servant remains under the roof of her employer, the latter has a perfect right to govern her actions to some extent; but the moment the servant finds for herself a home outside, her employer can have no more right to control her personal life in any way than she would that of her laundryman or baker. This factor alone will be most potent in raising the standard of the service. It will at once put domestic service on a par with hotel and restaurant service, with which it is really identical; the latter are to-day higher in the social scale only because of this absence of personal despotism.

The Competition Between Factory- and Kitchen-Made Products

Until recently the factory was a negative force only, contenting itself with enticing away the worker from home and kitchen, for purposes of its own. But now it is beginning to assert itself positively through the competition of its own products with the home-made article. Yesterday it was deferential and apologetic in pushing its wares; it conceded the superiority of "mother's bread" and "home-made" pies, but deprecatingly begged to offer its humble substitute to those poor creatures who could not have the luxury of the genuine; it never claimed more than an almost-as-good quality for them. But to-day it boldly enters the kitchen, planks down its product confidently, and says: "This isn't almost as good; it's *better*." The following advertisement of a brand of baked beans, culled from recent magazine pages, is a good specimen of the new shirt-sleeve style of advertising diplomacy:

TO OUR FAIR COMPETITORS

Let us discuss home baking [of beans].

Your way:

You bake in a dry heat oven.
The top beans crisp, but the beans below never get half enough heat.
So your beans don't digest; they ferment and form gases. They are mushy and broken, while every bean should be whole.
The tomato sauce isn't baked in.
The dish isn't very inviting . . . your people don't want it often.
The result of your time and trouble has been to spoil Nature's choicest food.

Our way:

We pay $2.25 per bushel to get the choicest beans grown.
We bake in steam ovens — in a heat of 245 degrees. We bake in small parcels, so the full heat goes through.
Thus all beans are baked alike — baked until they are mealy — baked so they all digest. Yet no bean is crushed, no skins broken
If you knew what you miss . . . what your people are missing . . .
Learn what the difference is.

It blazes this *argumentum ad feminam* irresistibly over the land, through every device that modern advertising has invented for the purpose. Yesterday it apologized; to-day it brags; to-morrow it will bully; finally it will project its great claw into the kitchen and remove from it anything and everything relating to household industries, thus completing the revolution begun, over a century ago, with the invention of the loom and spinning-jenny.

These forces, then, are working definitely, though unconsciously, toward a complete reorganization of the home. Whether this is desirable or not may be open to question; but desirable or undesirable, it is inevitable. To struggle against it is to struggle against the natural evolution of society. For our part, we prefer to believe that it will liberate womankind from a galling drudgery that is nothing but an unnecessary survival of primitive slavery and medieval serfdom. Once liberated from the helot burden of the primitive kitchen, womankind will work out its own salvation. Here, too, we prefer to believe that its genius will work out a salvation not only for itself but for the future race.

"But," cries one alert young wife, "this is a condition that confronts us, and not an economic theory. Enough of your blind forces. The problem is pressing us close, and we want some sort of a workable solution right now. We want to serve in our own War of Liberation. We want to master these forces and

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direct them skilfully to our own ends, so that we too, and not merely our children's children, shall live in the promised land."

Well taken! But these forces are strange Frankenstein monsters that can be driven only one way — forward, in the direction of social evolution, and not backward, in the direction of medievalism. The malady is long-standing and complicated. The first step toward a cure must consist in the formulation, clearly and honestly, of those principles that are modern and progressive in spirit, in order to be guided by them, and, with equal clearness and honesty, of those principles that are feudalistic and reactionary, in order to avoid them.

How the Servant May Be Re-Attached to the Home

To re-attach the servant to the home; to deprive her of an opportunity for personal life; to cheapen human labor; to prolong the working day; to re-introduce household drudgeries: these are reactionary measures, unworthy of striving for, difficult to attain, and impossible to maintain.

To put domestic service on a par with other worthy service — by encouraging specialization and initiative on the part of the servant; by permitting her to live her own life, in her own home, in her own way; by exacting only one day's efficient work in exchange for a day's pay in real money; by abolishing the personal relation as between mistress and maid and establishing a frank business relation as between employer and employee; by eliminating household industries as much as possible, at the same time keeping a vigilant eye on guard against the adulteration of the commercial product; by promoting coöperative neighborhood service bureaus; by improving domestic architecture so that a roomy kitchen laboratory will replace the kitchenette: this is in line with twentieth-century tendencies and possibilities. So, and so only, will the home get the maximum of efficient service and the worker the maximum of self-respect and contentment.

The old way, the way of the past and present, spelled cheap slovenly service through cheap servile labor crudely applied; the new way, the way of the future, spells cheap service through dear but efficient labor scientifically applied.

To recapitulate:

What is the servant problem? A scarcity of skilled houseworkers.

Why the scarcity? Because working-women desert housework in favor of industry.

Why? Because industry offers more of personal life.

Why? Because industry is modern and the home medieval in its organization.

Why is the home medieval? Because of the lack of mechanical appliances and labor-saving devices.

Why so backward in this respect? Because hitherto there has been an over-supply of cheap female labor.

What forces are working toward a solution? Many. The chief are: The scarcity of servants, which will stimulate the introduction of appliances. The invasion of the kitchen by factory products. The recognition of the human rights of the servant, and the equalization of conditions in domestic service with other services.

What effect will these have? Housework will become more desirable as an occupation.

And then? This will re-attract competent workers to the home.

So far, we have assumed that the problem *may* solve itself by natural evolution without conscious aid or hindrance from organized society. That is possible. But the other alternative — of conscious, collective effort — is also possible, and, we believe, preferable.

NOTE — STATISTICS OF DOMESTIC SERVICE

Supply and Demand. From 1870 to 1900 the demand for servants doubled, while the supply increased only by half. Within that period

The total population increased 95 per cent — from 38,558,371 to 75,994,575.

The number of families increased 114 per cent — from 7,579,363 to 16,239,797.

The working population increased 132.5 per cent — from 12,505,923 to 29,073,233.

The number of servants increased only 49 per cent — from 975,734 to 1,453,677.

Ostracism of Domestic Service. From 1870 to 1900 the number of working-women trebled, but the percentage entering domestic service fell steadily.

In 1870 there were 1,836,288 working-women, of whom 873,738 were servant girls — or 47.58 per cent.

In 1880 there were 2,647,157 working-women, of whom 969,975 were servants — or 36.64 per cent.

In 1890 there were 4,005,532 working-women, of whom 1,216,639 were servants — or 30.37 per cent.

In 1900 there were 5,319,397 working-women, of whom 1,283,763 were servants — or 24.13 per cent.

The percentage in four successive decades fell from 47.58 to 36.64 to 30.37 to 24.13.

This can be stated in another form:

In the decade 1870–1880 the number of working-women increased 44.2 per cent, but the number of servants increased only 11 per cent.

In the decade 1880–1890 the number of working-women increased 51.3 per cent, but of servants only 25.4 per cent.

In the decade 1890–1900 the number of working-women increased 32.8 per cent, but of servants only 5.5 per cent.

Native and Foreign Servants. From 1890 to 1900 the number of native white servant girls increased by 62,460, or 2.6 per cent, while the number of foreign white servants decreased by 41,390, or 4.9 per cent.

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EDITORIAL

EDITH FRANKLIN WYATT

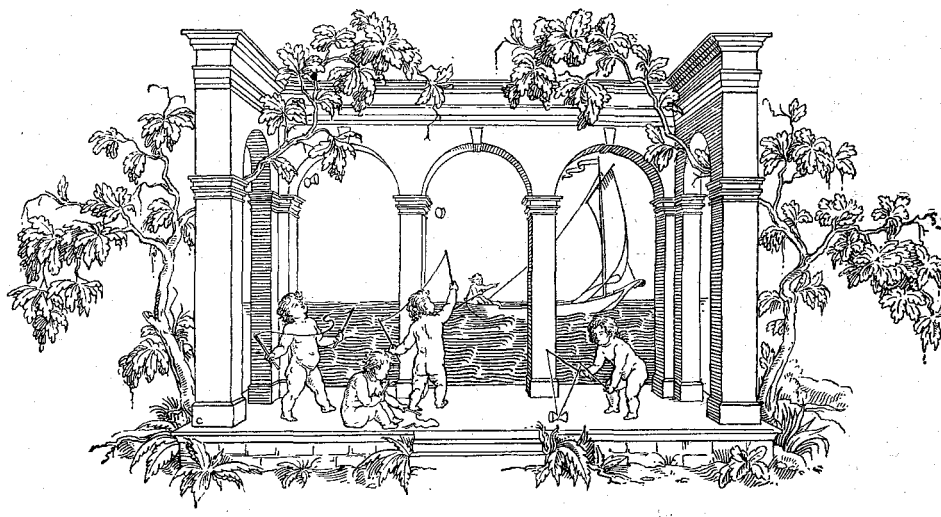
MISS WYATT, whose article, "Heroes of the Cherry Mine," opens this number of McCLURE'S, is peculiarly fitted by sympathy and association to write the story of the Cherry Mine disaster. Her father, Mr. F. O. Wyatt, is manager of large coal-mines at La Salle, Illinois, which is only a few miles from Cherry. Ever since leaving Bryn Mawr ten years ago, Miss Wyatt has divided her time and energy between literary and social work. On the civic side, she has been active in the National Consumers' League, and is Vice-President of the Illinois branch. In connection with the work of this League she has made important investigations regarding cruelty to animals at the Chicago stock-yards, and has published a report on the Chicago Garment Finishers.

Few writers have made so careful a study of sociological questions as Miss Wyatt; certainly few people are better equipped to write about them.

In a review of Miss Wyatt's literary art, Mr. Howells once said:

"The author's work, so far, is the apotheosis of the Democratic spirit. If you yourself have been so distinguished by your Maker as to have some essential difference from your fellow creatures, you will think it very common; but if you are, on the whole, not able to make out that you are better than others, you will be disposed, as I am, to rejoice that the average of human nature is so apparently kind and beautiful as Miss Wyatt sees it. . . . This is the really valuable contribution of the West — and of that Chicago in which the West has come to its consciousness — towards that poor American condition of English literature which has long been trying so hard to be itself in the face of such temptations to be something else.

"The Democracy which was the faith of New England became the life of the West; and now it is the Western voice in our literary art."



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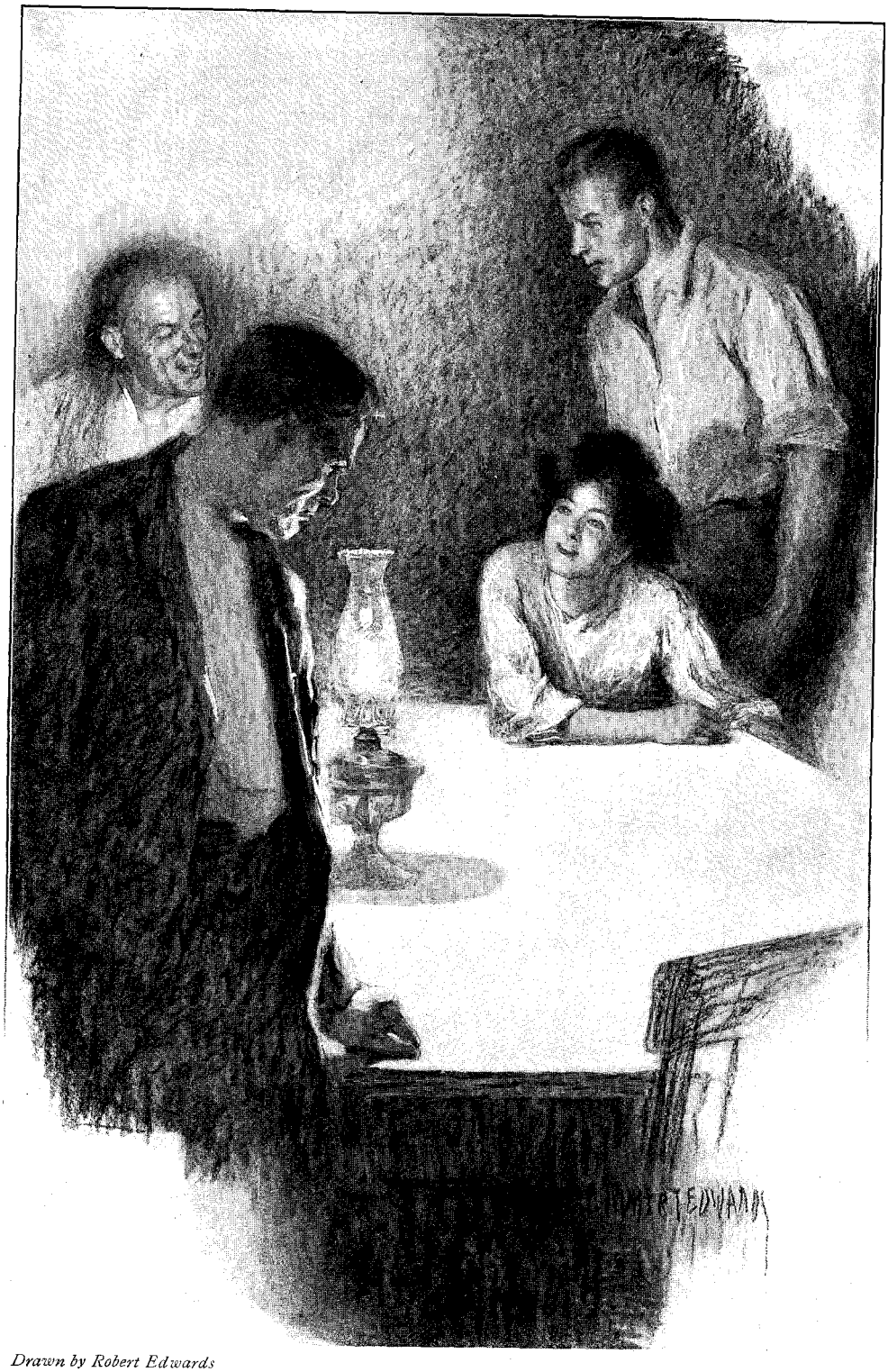

Drawn by Robert Edwards

"'NOW YOU'VE SWORN AT ME, BRADY, COME ON AND HIT ME!'"

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